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OXFORD

ITS BUILDINGS AND GARDENS

BY

RALPH DURAND

WITH

THIRTY-TWO DRAWINGS IN COLOUR

BY

WILLIAM A. WILDMAN

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
1909

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, SHOWING PRESIDENT'S LODGE
AND FOUNDER'S TOWER

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, SHOWING PRESIDENT'S LODGE
AND FOUNDER'S TOWER

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OXFORD

ITS BUILDINGS AND GARDENS

Fine Arts

BY

RALPH DURAND

WITH

THIRTY-TWO DRAWINGS IN COLOUR

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WILLIAM A. WILDMAN

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
1909

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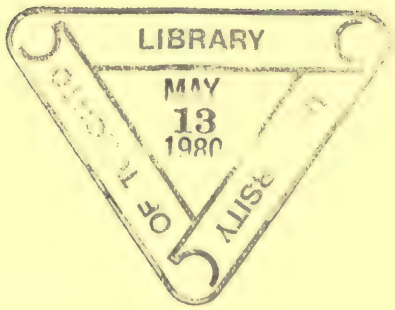

From the Author to the Reader

THE making of a garden necessitates the work of a gardener, but the gardener's work would avail little without the help of those humble, often-forgotten but most valuable assistants—earthworms. A book such as is now offered to the reader could never have been written but for the patient drudgery of those who do for history what earthworms do for a garden—bookworms. The author, therefore, desires to acknowledge that he would have been helpless but for the work of those who in the past and in the present have devoted much labour to grubbing amongst the dry and dusty archives of the Colleges and the University of Oxford, such as Anthony Wood of Merton College, Hearne of St. Edmund's Hall, the Oxford Historical Society, the authors of the Histories of Oxford Colleges, and especially Mr. Hastings Rashdall of New College. The result of an earthworm's labour is not pleasing to the eye until it has been clothed by gardeners with life and colour. The valuable matter brought to the surface by bookworms is sometimes dull until other writers with a wider horizon have brightened it with the flowers of insight and imagination. The author must also, therefore, acknowledge help derived from the work of

those gardeners who from the mould turned up by such book-worms have made the history of Oxford vivid and picturesque, among whom he is especially bound to mention John Richard Green of Jesus College and Andrew Lang of Balliol and Merton. He does not pretend to rank among such skilful gardeners as Green and Lang. He would have the reader regard him merely as a gardener's boy, who from among the flowers produced by more experienced hands has picked a nosegay for the reader to carry away with him. If the selection and arrangement of what is offered to the reader please, he is well satisfied.

Finally, the author desires to express gratitude for the personal help of Mr. H. C. Minchin of Wadham College.

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I

THE SPIRIT OF OXFORD

DEEPLY embedded in the heart of man lies the desire to feel, however slightly, some fellowship with the mighty Dead. This desire sometimes finds expression in curious ways. The most commonplace article known or reputed to have been handled by one whose name is emblazoned on the scroll of Fame becomes invested with a halo of spurious sanctity by those who feel the need of something more material than memory or tradition to which to pay their homage. Dr. Johnson's teapot—preserved in his old college—attracts the interest of hero-worshippers. They gaze at it with respect. If they have strongly developed capacities for reverence they may perhaps lower their voices in its presence! Never for a moment will they admit, even to themselves, that the relic somehow fails to inspire the awe which they feel to be its due. That teapot probably entered more than any of his possessions into the daily life of him to whom Miss Pinkerton used pompously to refer as "the great Lexicographer," and yet, despite its associations, it will never,

though it be treasured a thousand years, be anything less commonplace than an instrument for the concoction of tea. We might gaze at it for a year without feeling in the slightest degree in harmony with the stout-hearted, dogmatic, kindly scholar to whose comfort it once ministered.

We are more able to beget a sense of communion with one whose memory we cherish, and to stretch out hands towards him across the gulf of years, if we sit in the room where he worked, drink at the same tavern in which he talked and laughed, or worship where he worshipped. For this reason, so long as Oxford's stately colleges preserve even a semblance of their ancient form, they will have power to bring us in some degree into communion with those who lived and worked, thought and played within their walls. They remind us of men who took their part in moulding the history both of this Empire and of that great nation across the Atlantic which England begot and lost—Raleigh and Cecil Rhodes, Admiral Blake, Hampden, William Penn the founder of Pennsylvania, the late Lord Salisbury and his great political opponent Gladstone, William Pitt, Earl of Chatham who secured America for England, and Lord North who undid Chatham's work. They remind us of men who have worked for the Christian Church and the Christian Faith—Tyndale, Wycliffe, the Wesleys, Wolsey, Laud, Foxe, Erasmus, Keble, Newman, and

the three great missionary bishops, Heber, Patteson, and Hannington. They remind us of men whose written word still lives and will outlast the walls that sheltered them—Sir Philip Sidney, Ruskin, Addison, Gibbon, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne; and of men who in various ways did a conspicuous part of the work of their day —Sir Richard Burton, Hakluyt, Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Toynbee, Tom Hughes, Roger Bacon, monk and scientist, and the eminent scholar, Duns Scotus, whose conservatism Bacon attacked so fiercely that his agnomen, corrupted into *dunce*, has become a term of reproach for all who show inaptitude for the assimilation of new ideas.

But if we catch something of the spirit of the past when we sit in the lofty halls or pace the echoing cloisters of Oxford's colleges, how much more may we find ourselves in sympathy with the immortal minds that were nourished at Oxford when we come out into the sunshine and stroll in the gardens where they rested and took their pleasure! Time and the hand of the restorer are ever on the masonry of a college, but its garden is perennially youthful. It is true that its aspect changes with the seasons. The tender gaiety of spring gives place to the mature glory of summer and the sombre majesty of autumn, but these are passing moods. The spirit of an old garden, so long as it is tendered with such careful pride as is bestowed on Oxford's gardens, is

the same to-day as it was three hundred years ago. The dancing daffodils that catch and refresh the eye of some young "fresher" just released from a dreary lecture on the fundamental origin of the dative case have just the same gay charm as other daffodils may have had for some pale student of pre-Reformation days, when he came out into the garden after straining his eyes all day over some new-found classic that the first wave of the Renaissance had brought to Oxford. Though one may still stand in the gateway of Pembroke College, where groups of students crowded round Johnson, forgiving the ponderous rebukes with which he visited any "misuse of the English tongue," for the sake of his brilliant conversation, the quadrangles through which Johnson and his colleagues chivied unhappy servitors have disappeared; but the Christchurch meadows, where he wasted a morning in sliding on the ice when he should have been at a lecture, have much the same appearance as they had in his day.

We may walk in the stately grove beloved of Addison and know that our eyes rest on just such tranquil beauty as soothed and inspired him, or we may sit in the shade by the lake in the gardens of Worcester College and reflect that here Richard Lovelace came to muse and sigh when necessity and his tutor kept him away from the side of Althaea or Lucasta, or whatever fair maiden held his heart in thrall during his Oxford days.

Oxford's beautiful gardens, moreover, are a symbol of her perpetual youth ; that youth which seems to harmonise so ill with her sober halls and grey monastic cloisters, that youth which will always assert itself, in spite of all the statutes that the wit of man can devise, so long as the larger, certainly the more conspicuous, portion of Oxford men are of the age when the first vigour of manhood is unfettered by responsibility, and youth becomes intoxicated with the first sweet draught of hilarious liberty. The bell of St. Mary's no longer rings out defiance to the bell of St. Martin's, summoning gownsmen to resist the raids of townsmen. No college now decides to leave Oxford in order that its members may pursue their studies undisturbed by riots between Northerners and Southerners. Never again will law-abiding undergraduates be grieved by the sight of their revered Proctors being trampled under the feet of brawling Christchurch men, who, having met for a friendly debate on moral philosophy or divinity with the men of Exeter, and having found the heads of their opponents too thick to be penetrated by their arguments, have poured into the street for elbow-room, in order that they might try if blows would prove more effectual than words. An end has come even to the town and gown rows, by which the long-dead feud between the Church and the civil power was kept in memory by all undergraduates and bargees who had a proper reverence for ancient customs.

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Though Oxford is now more orderly it is not because she is any less young, but because she has found more seemly outlets for her youthful spirits. During the last century athletics, hitherto practically unknown at Oxford, have taken a conspicuous and honourable place in her life. Rivalry between the colleges finds vent not in the streets, but on the Isis. Other forms of athletics have their part in Oxford life, but the cult of the oar receives the homage of all. Once a year Oxford, for one light-hearted week, almost abandons her plodding march along the stony paths that lead to knowledge, and frolics by the river-side. Then the men selected to uphold the honour and dignity of their college, who throughout the winter have scorned delights, submitted themselves to vigorous training, fed austerely on "hard steak and harder hen," and endured without murmuring the insults of the expert oarsman who coached them, now have a brief series of crowded hours of glorious life. The streets of the old town are brightened by the gay spring frocks of the ladies who pour into Oxford for "eights' week" by every train. Dusty dons put away their lexicons, leave their deserted lecture-rooms, and join the crowds that stream towards the river-bank. Undergraduates who have not the honour of tugging an oar for their respective colleges escort each other's sisters to view the races from the college barges, or line the towpath and encourage the crews with raucous cries as the boats swing by. Bumps

are made, places won and lost, reputations made and broken, and Christchurch meadows ring with cheers as the panting victors paddle home.

There is one other occasion on which Oxford manifests her youth. When the work of the scholastic year is done the University confers honorary degrees on men whose work has earned them recognition. It is fitting that such honours should be conferred in public and with ceremonial pomp, but such functions, if performed in too stately and decorous a fashion, are in danger of becoming deadly dull for all but the gratified recipients of the honours conferred. For this reason the University in olden days permitted kindred ceremonies to be enlivened by the buffooneries of a licensed jester known as Terrae Filius. His office has now been abolished, and his place on such occasions is usurped by undergraduates whose jests, though not officially sanctioned, are, to judge by old records, more witty and in better taste than those of the official buffoon of yore.

Oxford is not of course wholly free from the faults incidental to youth. The Proctor's office is not yet obsolete, though he no longer carries a poleaxe with which to enforce his authority. Bacchus is still occasionally worshipped with more zeal than discretion, and on nights when the spirits of a college are boiling over with delight over some hardly-won triumph, its Dean still hesitates to go to bed lest he should be called out

in his pyjamas to restore law and order. Still, if youthful spirit sometimes finds expression in unseemly ways, moralists may console themselves with the ancient and immortal truth preserved in our Latin Grammars, *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.*

II

THE OLD CITY WALL

"Doth not this grey earth still some shelter hold
Where we, toil-worn, may cast us down and seem
But for an hour to find our lives a dream?"

WHOEVER makes pilgrimage to the great home of learning that has its seat by the slowly-winding Isis, and wanders among its lofty towers, stately cloisters, and vaulted halls, cannot but feel overawed by the dignified old age of his surroundings. Just as the flowing lines and sharply-pointed arches of Gothic architecture were deliberately designed to catch the eye and lead it up and up till the spirit followed it heavenward, so the general effect of mediæval buildings is to make the beholder conscious of his own littleness and insignificance.

This, soothing at first, tends to become wearisome, for a man's mind is not capable of preserving a sense of reverence for any prolonged period. It is therefore with a feeling of natural relief that a wanderer among Oxford's colleges, whose awe is degenerating into

melancholy, emerges from some dimly-lighted passage into a blaze of light and colour, and finds himself standing in one of the peerless gardens for which Oxford is famous. The sight is as startling and delightful as would be the sound of the sudden joyous laugh of a child heard in some mouldering Norman keep. The pilgrim's eye, wearied with the sober uniformity of sombre greys, is refreshed by gay "Bels and Flourets of a thousand hues," and his spirit, subdued by the brooding genius of the dead past, revives in the presence of youth, beauty, colour, and infinite variety. The garden laughs away his melancholy and challenges him to find anything in all the human handiwork that has overawed him one-half as beautiful as the least of her thousand flowers.

There are many and gay beauty spots in Oxford, for the accumulated wisdom of centuries has discovered, among many other less important facts, that beauty is as necessary to the proper education of a man's mind as are food and sleep to the welfare of his body. For this reason the wisest of those who in the past had charge of the national seat of learning and those who inherit the trust at the present day have spent, and still spend, money, love, and care on the making and upkeep of gardens as fair as any that a king can walk in.

Of all the Oxford colleges and halls, none has a garden more beautiful than that which belongs to what

for the last five hundred years has been known as New College. Here one may walk "with eev'n step and musing gait" along paths bordered with iris and wallflower, tulip, and carnation, or rest lying full-length on soft green turf under the cool shade of giant horse-chestnuts. Let him who is weary with the daily round of petty cares, or jaded with the dusty logic and philosophy of the schools, come here some evening in early summer, and as the shadows lengthen listen to thrushes and blackbirds answering with careless hilarity the solemn cawing of the rooks and the mellow chimes of distant church bells. If Peace does not steal into his soul here he may elsewhere search for it in vain.

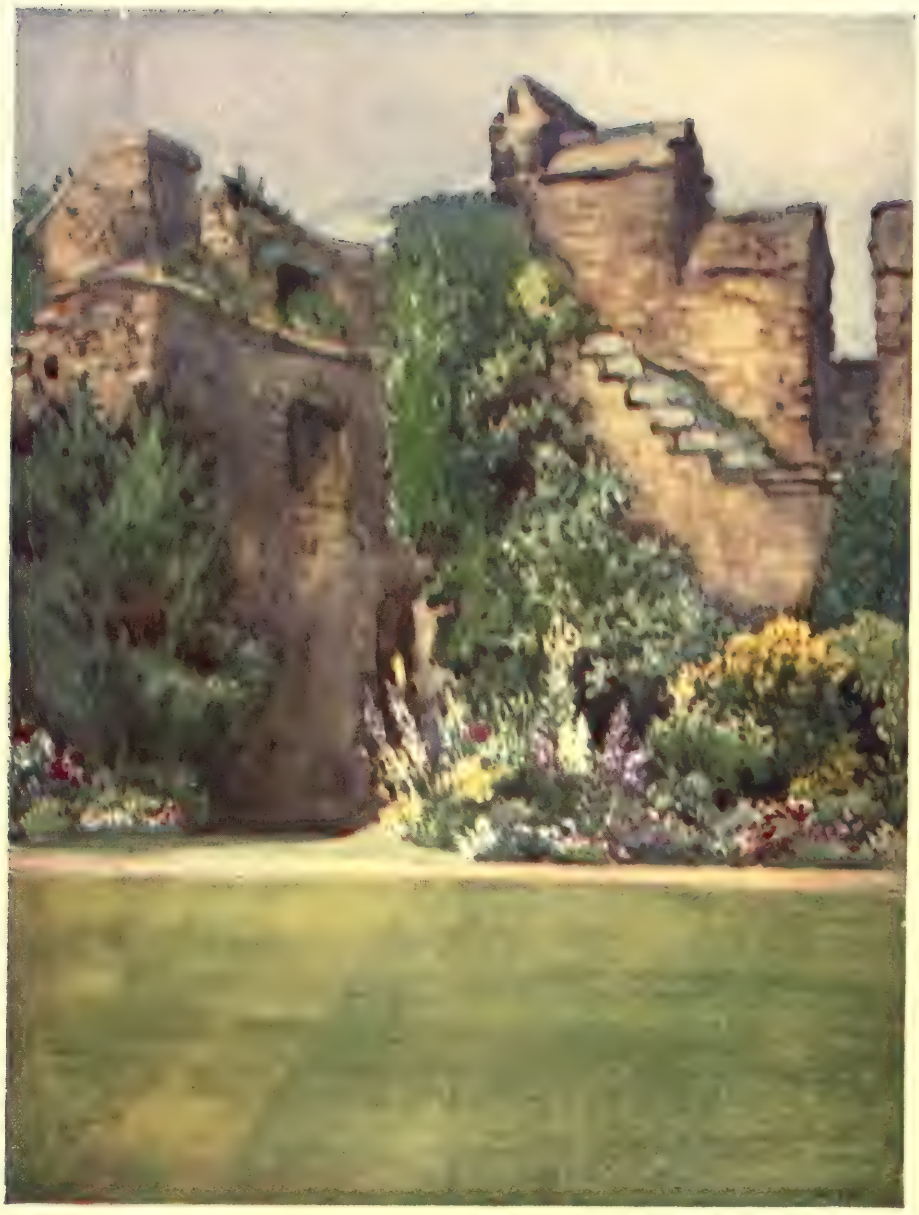
The old garden gives food for thought, too. Look at that grey, ivy-clad old wall! It has perhaps seen more centuries than the white butterfly flitting across its face has seen hours. Along its top runs a flagged pathway protected on the outer side by a battlemented parapet, and at regular intervals steps lead upwards from this pathway to the summits of bastions. That sentry walk echoed night after night for many a long year to the tramp of armed heels, and men have stood on those bastions as the sun dipped below the Cotswold hills, straining their eyes across the marshes of the Cherwell lest an armed foe should find the city unprepared to defend herself.

Historians cannot tell us when Oxford was first

fortified, but since its position, from the point of view of the military strategist, is exceptionally strong, it is probable that it was designed from the first to act as a stronghold. Commanding a ford, flanked on three sides by a river and protected to the northward until recent years by marshy ground, it could not easily be attacked by any force that did not possess artillery. Perhaps Cuthwulf, King of the West Saxons, built it within rude turf dykes raised by the British king Vortigeon, when, having overrun the valley of the Severn almost as far as the Dee, he turned towards London and carried fire and sword along the valley of the Thames. Nor is it known who first built the walls that surrounded mediæval Oxford. Tradition has it that Offa, King of Mercia, Æthelred II, King of the English, and Harold Harefoot, the Dane, each for a time had his headquarters at Oxford, and any of these may have been he who first raised the walls. This much is certain, that they were standing before the Saxons bowed their necks to the Norman yoke, for it is written in *Domesday Book* that the men who lived in "the houses called *murales*"—that is, in houses built in the angles formed by the projecting bastions—were "free from all custom except the setting forth towards a warr and the reparation of the wall," a privilege that existed before the days of Edward the Confessor.

Robert d'Oilgi (or d'Oily; the orthography of his

A Wall that was old when the University was young:
Fragment of the old City Wall in New College Gardens



period was not hampered by narrow arbitrary rules such as prevail to-day), one of William the Conqueror's Norman knights, in his capacity of Constable of Oxford, laid a heavy hand on the Oxford burghers and compelled them not only to strengthen the wall, but also to build him a castle. Stephen captured the city during his war with Matilda and, furious that the Queen had escaped him, did his best to demolish the wall. It was, however, almost as costly and difficult to destroy a wall of that period as to build it, and the greater part of it remained.

Several of the Plantagenet kings concerned themselves to see that the strength of the wall was maintained. Those in particular who felt their thrones to be insecure recognised that Oxford, with its central position between north and south, east and west, and its strategical advantages, might afford temporary lodging to a king driven out of his capital by rebel barons. Henry III ordered the wall to be repaired, but the Mayor of Oxford, on receiving the command, represented that it was by no means easy to obey it. The inhabitants of the *murales*, instead of living rent free as in Saxon times, on condition that they kept the wall in repair and held themselves ready to defend it, were now under obligation to pay a tax called *muragium* for its upkeep. Most of them were, however, poor students of the infant university, and, insolent with pride in view of the

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extraordinary privileges which Henry's predecessor had granted them, would neither pay the *muragium* nor recognise the Mayor's authority. Henry could not afford to allow a possible stronghold, from which he might defy his exasperated subjects, to fall into decay, nor could he afford to offend members of the University, who had far greater power in Oxford than had its ordinary citizens. To solve the difficulty he remitted the *muragium*, and ordained that the walls should be kept in repair with funds raised by the levying of an octroi duty on produce brought into the town. So far as his own personal interests were concerned, he might have neglected not only to repair the wall, but also to conciliate the members of the University, for it was within the walls of Oxford that he was compelled not only to confirm, but to strengthen the provisions of Magna Charta.

When another king, Edward II, realised that authority was slipping from his grasp, he issued an order that the students of the University were to hold themselves ready to defend the wall against a possible attack from Roger Mortimer. His son Edward III had the wall repaired, as also did Richard II, who, thinking that the city might prove useful in case the French invaded England, and also, perhaps, that it might afford him a point of vantage in the impending struggle with the House of Lancaster, ordained that a tax for the repair of the wall should be

levied on all inhabitants of Oxford, clergy and laity alike.

Poor students of the University continued to lodge in the *murales* down to about the middle of the reign of good Queen Bess, but the growth of wealth and luxury under the Tudors caused their use for this purpose to be gradually discontinued. Anthony Wood, one of Oxford's most painstaking historians, wrote:—"These turrets were anciently inhabited by schollers till our grandfather's dayes and Pelham of New College was one of the last that had his chamber there." The wall was put to sterner uses, however, before Anthony Wood grew to manhood. When the ill-fated Charles I fled from London he established his headquarters at Oxford, and to this city he retired when it became obvious after the battle of Edgehill that all hope of averting civil war must be abandoned. The University stood by him nobly, as in honour it was bound to do since one of the chief causes of the rebellion was Charles's attempt to ram the religious thought of the Oxford school down his subjects' throats. The Queen was lodged in Merton College, and the King in Christchurch. New College was turned into a garrison. The colleges pawned or melted their plate to furnish the King with money. Trenches were dug and embankments thrown up beyond the walls. Six hundred members of the University, formed into four troops, one of halberdiers, one of pikemen, and two of muske-

teers, drilled in New College quadrangle, and its cloisters and tower were turned into arsenals for the storage of ammunition. A rampart was built across Magdalen Bridge, stones were carried to the top of Magdalen Tower to be dropped on the heads of the Parliament's soldiers in case they surmounted this obstacle, and a cannon was mounted on a mound in New College garden that is now known as Mount Parnassus.

A story full of pathos is told of how Charles in these troublous times, partly in jest and partly in grim earnestness, sought comfort in his anxiety by seeking an augury. In the Bodleian Library one day he determined in classical fashion to try "sortes Virgilianae." It would have been better for his peace of mind if he had not invoked an omen, for opening the *Æneid* he lit haphazard on the lines—

> "Let him for succour sue from place to place,
> Torn from his subjects, and his son's embrace.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And when at length the cruel war shall cease,
> On hard conditions may he buy his peace."

The omen was ill enough, but Lord Falkland, hoping to dismiss the matter with a laugh, made it worse, for he opened the book at the lines—

> "O curst essay of arms, disastrous doom,
> Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come,"

MERTON COLLEGE, IN WHICH QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA WAS LODGED DURING THE CIVIL WAR, SHOWING A BASTION OF THE OLD CITY WALL

which form part of Evander's lament over the death of his son. Lord Falkland was killed soon afterwards at the battle of Newbury.

It is little wonder that in these troublous times the students[1] became "so besotted with their training that they could never be brought to their books again." The occupation of a soldier (especially in a blockaded city) is of all occupations most distracting to quiet thought. His mind is enervated by the dreary monotony of his duties. One uneventful day follows another, and he must go through the same mechanical daily round; constant drills and long lonely hours at the sentry's post, when nothing occurs to relieve him from the tedium of his own thoughts. The lifeless routine is as wearisome as that of a convict within prison walls, yet all the while his nerves are racked by the thought that at a moment's notice he may be called upon to face death, that one act of carelessness may bring disaster.

At long intervals the monotony of the siege was broken, and news passed through the city that a man had slipped through the ranks of the Parliamentarian forces bringing rumours of victory or defeat. Once those who lined the east wall saw the King standing on the top of Magdalen Tower, and knew that he was watching the movements of Essex's forces. Soon afterwards the

[1] The word undergraduate had recently come into use, but only as a term of contempt.

gallant hot-headed Prince Rupert galloped out of the western gate, and the word went round that he had gone to organise a Royalist rising in Cornwall. Early in the following year the army under Essex and Waller returned and drew again a cordon round the city, knowing that the King was within its walls. A weary, anxious month followed, and then the news flashed from street to college tower, from bastion to outwork, that Charles had run the blockade and escaped. The tide of war then swept away to other parts of England, and Oxford was left in peace. On June 20th, 1646, it was no longer possible, with any hope of success, to uphold the Royalist cause, and the Oxford garrison surrendered to Fairfax, being allowed to leave the city with the honours of war. Fortunate it is, for the sake of her ancient buildings, that Oxford had not to face an actual attack, for had the Parliamentary troops taken the city by storm many of her most beautiful features might have suffered at the hands of the fanatical element among the Roundhead soldiers. The windows of Christchurch Cathedral suffered as it was, but Fairfax earned the gratitude of posterity by placing a guard over the priceless treasures of the Bodleian Library.

Most of the old city wall has long since disappeared, but, thanks to the fact that the ancient boundaries of Merton and New College touched it, parts of the wall have been preserved in the gardens of these two colleges. New College, indeed, is under obligation to keep her part

of the wall in perpetual repair in return for the surrender of a public lane that once crossed her land. The old wall will never again be used for military purposes, for a modern Long Tom concealed in Bagley Woods could knock it into smithereens in the course of a few hours. It stands now—this wall that was old when the ancient University was young—to remind us how greatly the history of Oxford is interwoven with the history of England.

III

TOWN AND GOWN ROWS

ONE of the most characteristic sights of modern Oxford is that presented by the High Street at half-past six on any afternoon in "eights' week." The races are over for the day, and a dense crowd comes swarming up from the river; men in sweaters and abbreviated flannel knickerbockers, begrimed with the dust of the towpath; learned Dons arrayed in what a learned Don regards as summer holiday attire; townsfolk discussing the chances of "Jaggers" bumping "The House" before eights' week is over with an animation that shows how friendly an interest they take in everything that concerns the University; flustered chaperones; girls in pretty frocks eager to learn during their short stay as much as they can of the ancient city, and undergraduates delighted to impart the desired information.

It is natural that an undergraduate should take a keen interest in archæology. On his matriculation he is presented with a volume, written principally in mediæval Latin, entitled, *Statuta et Decreta Universitatis Oxoni-*

"THE HIGH" AND QUEEN'S COLLEGE FRONT, SHOWING A STATUE OF QUEEN CAROLINE

ensis. If he is conscientious and anxious to learn what are the laws he must obey, he loses no time in reading it,[1] and no sooner does he begin to read it than he discovers that it is no mere dry list of rules and regulations, but a deeply interesting relic of the Middle Ages. Regulations that forbid him to fight his tutors or men of other nations (such as Scotch, Welsh, or Irish fellow-undergraduates), to keep hawks, hunt wild beasts, or carry spears or other weapons (except bows and arrows for purposes of honest recreation), make him realise, if he did not realise it before, under what strange and turbulent conditions his ancient University came into being.

Eights' week visitors, therefore, can have no better guide to Oxford than an undergraduate whose interest in past ages has been whetted by dutiful study of the University statutes. He can point out many a spot rich with old associations, and tell many a story—not always edifying—of what has happened there. He can show the gateway of Pembroke College, where Dr. Johnson when an undergraduate preached discontent against authorities grown lazy with good living, and Tom Tower over Christchurch gateway, from which curfew rang out every

[1] On every second-hand bookstall it is possible to buy at the rate of twopence apiece an unlimited number of copies of *Statuta et Decreta.* The fact that they are as clean as when they left the printer's hands bears testimony to the respect paid them by their former undergraduate owners.

night for four centuries,[1] until some Christchurch undergraduates, annoyed at being refused permission to stay out late, decided that, for that night at least, "Great Tom" should not ring, and screwed up the belfry door.

Tradition clusters too thickly round Oxford's towers and cloisters for the undergraduate to tell his guests in the few short hours at their disposal more than a small part of what may be told; but, whatever else he omits, he will not fail to show them the University Church, and to tell them how in bygone days its bell used to summon the members of the University to repel the attacks of the townspeople. His guests, on their guard against the playful operation known to adolescent humorists as "leg-pulling," will most likely refuse to believe the story, and will accuse him of improving on the history of Mr. Verdant Green. In this sprightly but fictitious account of an Oxford undergraduate's adventures is described a "town-and-gown row" in which a Proctor, instead of sending the rowdy undergraduates home to bed, actually entered Exeter College and called on all within its walls to come out and fight the mob.

The undergraduate might rightly protest that not only was the town-and-gown row described by Mr. Cuthbert Bede typical of what frequently occurred in the streets of

[1] The story is more interesting than accurate. During the old bell's long career of usefulness incidents such as recasting and moving from one place to another have interfered with the regular performance of its duties.

Oxford in the middle of the nineteenth century, but that such a row was but a spiritless affair compared with many that had taken place in earlier days. He might without exaggeration quote from Rashdall's *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* to the effect that "there is probably not a yard of ground in any part of the classic High Street between Carfax and St. Mary's (the University Church) that has not at one time or other been soaked with blood."

It would probably be within the mark to say that the old tower of St. Mary's Church has looked down on as many bloody fights as it has seen years—fights between Dons and their pupils, between one college and another, between members of the different nations represented at Oxford, but chiefly and most frequently between "town" and "gown"—that is to say, between the citizens of Oxford and members of the University. The fights between Dons and their pupils ceased when the University became properly organised. International rows lasted until the union of England with Scotland. Fights of a fairly harmless sort between one college and another were still common in the middle of the seventeenth century, but the fights between "town" and "gown" continued until a few years ago. These became spiritless, motiveless affairs before they finally died of inanition, but they were serious enough up to comparatively recent times; one that took place when it became known that Queen Caro-

line had been acquitted of the villainous charges brought against her was so serious that the winter term of 1820 was brought prematurely to an end. They frequently occurred in Jacobite days, when the town was Whig and the University Tory. Almost invariably when England was rent by acute party rivalry the town was on one side and the University on the other, with the inevitable result that "town" and "gown" came to blows, and in a great number of cases the troubles that disturbed England originated at Oxford. In Plantagenet times "every phase of ecclesiastical or political strife," said John Richard Green, a native of Oxford, a Fellow of Jesus College, and one of Oxford's most fascinating historians, "was preluded by some fierce outbreak in this turbulent surging mob."

How did the town-and-gown rows originate? To understand this it is necessary to know something of the conditions of Oxford life when the University was in its infancy, and also to recall the feud that existed for several centuries between the Church and the civil power, the feud that cost Thomas à Becket his life.

Under the feudal system learning afforded the only means by which a man might improve his social position. A serf remained a serf, a yeoman was content to remain a yeoman; but a graduate of a University, though he were the son of a scullion, might rise to be Archbishop of Canterbury. It followed that though some of those

who came to study at Oxford were the sons of barons or wealthy merchants, the majority were men of the poorest class such as could not hope to advance themselves except by scholarship. Other considerations, however, besides a laudable desire for knowledge brought men to Oxford. In mediæval times the Church enjoyed the absolute right of trying and punishing any one of its members who committed a crime, and it was notoriously lenient to clerical offenders. The civil power could not punish any man who could claim "benefit of clergy," and since any man who could steal a cassock might pass himself off as a priest, this immunity from civil law extended to anyone who could prove that he was educated.

> "If a clerk had been taken for stealing of bacon,
> For burglary, murder or rape,
> If he could but rehearse (well-prompt) his neck verse
> He could never fail to escape."

The "neck-verse" which those who claimed benefit of clergy used to read to prove that they were educated was the first verse of the fifty-first psalm, *Miserere mei.* Education, therefore, was a thing to be desired, not only by those who loved it for its own sake, and by those who looked to it to advance their material welfare, but also by those who might conceivably need it to save themselves from the gallows.

The number of those who came from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland to study at Oxford included, besides men occasionally compelled by sheer poverty to beg or steal, a rowdy element of roysterers, gamblers, bullies, dare-devils of the François Villon type, who did pretty much what they pleased, secure in the knowledge that the civil courts had no power over them, and hated by the townsfolk, who (as did the laity all over England) resented their enjoyment of privileges from which they themselves were debarred.

If the gownsmen enjoyed immunity from common law, the townsmen had the advantage of being able to squeeze money out of them. Shelter and food being absolute necessities, the citizens were able to combine to send up the prices of lodgings and provisions to exorbitant rates, and when the gownsmen were compelled to borrow money with which to buy food, the Jews took advantage of their necessity to charge exorbitant rates of interest. It is hardly a matter for surprise that the gownsmen frequently took advantage of their privileged position. Men who could not pay their rent defied their landlords and refused to quit their lodgings. Some, when the burden of debt became intolerable, combined to sack the Jewish quarter. It followed that each party in the town cherished a perpetual sense of grievance against the other, and that there existed between the two parties latent hostility liable to become active whenever any

quarrel between a student and a citizen provided the necessary stimulus. An argument in a tavern would develop into a fight and attract spectators who soon became partisans. Both parties would send for help. If matters became serious the townspeople would summon their fellows by ringing the bell of the City Church, St. Martin's, and the Chancellor of the University, or *Rector Scholarum* as he was first called, would be obliged, as he valued the lives of those under his charge, to order the bell of St. Mary's to be rung in order that all gownsmen should come to the assistance of their hard-pressed colleagues.

Two such rows are memorable in the history of Oxford, for the result of the first was to lay the foundation of the University's revenues and to obtain for it formal recognition as a factor in the State, and in consequence of the second the University obtained in a unique fashion a power over the town which in many respects it enjoys to the present day.

In the first of these two riots a gownsman accidentally killed a woman and fled. The infuriated townsmen, unable to catch him, arrested the students who shared his lodgings, imprisoned them, and appealed to King John for permission to hang them. This permission John, who hated clerks even more than he hated the rest of his subjects, readily gave. The University, already a self-governing body but not as yet officially recognised,

enraged at this violation of "benefit of clergy," decided to mark its displeasure by leaving the town. Some of its members went to Reading, some to Paris, some to Cambridge, where they founded the University that has been there ever since. The sudden loss of three thousand inhabitants was a paralysing blow to the town, for the citizens, having no one to occupy their lodgings or buy their provisions, found themselves face to face with bankruptcy. Humbly they appealed to the University to forgive, forget, and return. The University, however, held out for a long time, and when it did return it was under conditions which both humiliated the town and materially strengthened its own position. From King John the University obtained its first Charter. From the town it obtained a promise that half the rent of students' lodgings was to be remitted for ten years, that provisions were to be sold at prices to be regulated by the University, that any clerk arrested by the town officials was to be surrendered to the University authorities, that every year a hundred poor scholars were to be feasted by the town, and that a sum of forty-two shillings was annually to be devoted to the needs of poor students, and that finally, in token of contrition, the townsfolk were to exhume the bodies of the gownsmen they had hanged, and to bury them in the University cemetery, following the funeral procession with bare feet, without cloaks and bareheaded.

What the gownsmen had suffered from the hands of the Jews may be guessed from the fact that soon afterwards it was ordained, after fifty-five students had been imprisoned for making a raid on the Jewish quarter, that no Jew should charge more than 43 per cent per annum for a loan to a student. The forty-two shillings to be paid annually to poor students is noteworthy because it represented the first regular revenue that the University received. Soon afterwards an arrangement was made by which the neighbouring abbey of Eynsham paid the annual fine. When Henry VIII confiscated the assets of this abbey he recognised and assumed this particular liability, and ever since, in consequence, the Crown has paid the University the sum of £3 1s. 6d. annually.

Though the relations between town and gown were now better regulated the old hostility was intensified, and showed itself in frequent rows between the scholars and the townspeople. The second great row, as a result of which the University obtained its power over the town, was far more sanguinary than the one which has just been recorded. It began in a tavern, on St. Scholastica's Day in the year 1333, "several snappish words" being exchanged between some clerks who asserted that the wine offered them was vile, and the vintner who maintained that it was excellent. The argument developing, the clerks threw first the wine and then the winecups at the

vintner's head. Very soon the townsmen, summoned by the bell of St. Martin's, turned out armed with bows, arrows, and other weapons to avenge the insult offered to the tavern-keeper. The Chancellor, who at first endeavoured to stop the riot by peaceful persuasion, had to run for his life back to the safety of the University quarters. Then the bell of St. Mary's rang out its answer to the bell of St. Martin's and the gownsmen assembled, pouring out of Merton, Balliol, University College, Exeter, Oriel, and Queen's, all of which colleges had been founded by this time. They were armed, despite regulations which forbade them to possess weapons, for they came from all parts of the country by roads on which every man who possessed a purse had to rely on his own manhood to defend it. The riot continued with more tumult than bloodshed till darkness brought enforced peace, and next morning, thinking the matter at an end, the scholars went quietly to their respective lecture-rooms. The town bailiff, however, had meanwhile been organising his forces, and sending into the surrounding country for hired assistance. Next day, while the gownsmen were in their lecture rooms, the attack was renewed. Some of the scholars were surprised as they came unarmed away from lectures, others were set upon while still at work. Seeing that the affair was going to be serious the gownsmen shut and barred the town gates, but not before a mob of two

EXETER COLLEGE FROM THE RECTOR'S GARDEN

thousand peasants had effected an entrance. These, fortunately for the students, were more intent on pillage than on murder. Butteries were broken into, wine casks broached; halls and inns were besieged, taken, gutted, and burned. Costly manuscripts, laboriously engrossed and emblazoned, were tossed into the streets to be torn and trampled under the feet of the rioters. When night fell again the Chancellor issued an order that all scholars were to stay next day within walls, and then he posted off to Woodstock, seven miles away, to ask help of King Edward III, who happened to be staying there. The King apparently was unable to render any assistance, for the riot broke out next day with increased force. Many scholars were caught, killed, and mutilated; others were hauled off to the town prison. The mob showed its grim humour on some unhappy chaplains whom they relieved of the necessity of ever shaving their tonsures again by flaying the crowns of their heads. So violent was the rage of the crowd that even the Church was powerless to protect the students. The Friars left their convent, which stood on the site now occupied by Wadham College, and marched into the town chanting a Litany and bearing the Host, but their crucifixes were dashed to the ground, and students who clung to them for protection were killed before their eyes. Some gownsmen sought sanctuary at the altars in the churches, but

were found, hauled into the streets, and killed. Sixty-three scholars in all were killed, and peace was only restored when all the members of the University, with the exception of those of Merton College, the walls of which were strong enough to resist attack, had fled the town.[1]

Again the University was withdrawn from the town, and again too late its citizens repented. When for the second time the University returned to Oxford, it was armed with "a charter of privileges which left the citizens helpless and made the University supreme." For many years afterwards the University had, among other powers, the right to try any civil or criminal case in which a member of the University was either plaintiff or defendant. To this day it retains a privilege, shared by Cambridge University, of using arbitrary means of preserving the morality of the town. In 1800, during a town-and-gown row, a townsman was arrested by the Proctor for refusing to go home when told to do so, and lodged for two days and nights in the Castle prison. He brought an action against the Proctor, but wisely withdrew it when he learned that his case would come before the University Court.

In addition to surrendering practically all their remaining privileges the townsfolk had to submit to an annual

[1] A vivid account of this famous town-and-gown row may be read in Rashdall's *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages.*

penance. Once a year, on Saint Scholastica's Day, the anniversary of the riot, the Mayor of the town, the bailiffs, and sixty citizens (to make the number of penitents up to the number of gownsmen who had been killed) had to march in procession barefooted and with ropes round their necks to St. Mary's Church to say a Mass for the souls of their victims and to offer a penny apiece at the altar. If at any time the penance was not performed the University fined the town a hundred marks. On several occasions the town endeavoured to be absolved from this duty, but until comparatively recent years without avail. At the Reformation, since Masses for the dead were abolished, the town hoped to escape its annual humiliation, but the Mass was altered to sermon and Litany and the payment of sixty-three pennies was enforced before. In 1800 the townsfolk made another effort to escape and neglected to perform the ceremony, whereupon the University successfully sued the town for its hundred marks forfeit money. Eventually the function became a nuisance to the University officials themselves. The Vice-Chancellor and Proctors often had to sit in St. Mary's for hours while the Town Clerk went from house to house collecting the necessary number of penitents. At last, in 1825, the citizens gave the University a broad hint that they did not intend any longer to profess contrition for sins committed nearly five hundred years before, and the Uni-

Legislative Library Ontario.

versity graciously released them from further performance of this humiliating obligation.

It seems a pity that so ancient and interesting a ceremony should have been abandoned! Might it not, in these days when every village holds its pageant, be revived by the leading citizens of Oxford? The old enmity between town and gown, kept alive no doubt through so many centuries by the humiliation to which townsmen were yearly subjected, has been forgotten. Even the mild town-and-gown rows of recent years no longer occur.

In mediæval times the Chancellor of the University used sometimes to settle quarrels between heads of Halls by directing them to kiss each other in public and afterwards entertain each other at dinner. Here is an admirable precedent that might be followed if the old ceremony were revived. It might be followed by a banquet at which the Mayor and Vice-Chancellor should —perhaps not kiss each other—but at any rate pledge each other in a loving cup in token that ancient feuds between town and gown had been forgotten and forgiven.

IV

THE AGE OF THE SCHOOLMEN

"A clerk ther was of Oxenford also
That unto logik hadde longe i-go.
As lene was his horse as is a rake,
And he was not right fat, I undertake;
. . . .
For him was levere have at his beddes heede
Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reede,
Of Aristotle and his philosopie,
Then robes riche, or fithele, or gay sawtrie.
. . . .
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

. . . .

AMONG the sights of Oxford which must on no account be missed by the conscientious tourist who wishes to "do" the city thoroughly is the view which may be obtained, at the cost of twopence and a little energy, by climbing to the top of Magdalen Tower and looking westward over the town. As he gazes over the maze of stately domes and spires, steeples and towers, that give grace to England's most ancient seat

of learning, he will find it hard to cast his mind back into the past and picture to himself what the town was like in the years that saw the birth of the University. Could he do so the lofty halls and ornate pinnacles would disappear, and he would see their place taken by a squalid mass of ramshackle hovels, pent within a thick-set battlemented wall, intersected with narrow, filthy ill-paved lanes, with here and there a squat Norman church showing up above the roofs, and in the background Robert D'Oily's Norman castle frowning down over all.

The University was in existence before the first stone of the oldest college was laid. Exactly how and when it came into being it is impossible to say. (For many years it was commonly believed, on the authority of archives possessed by University College, that it was founded by Alfred the Great, but that tradition was based on an impudent and not very ingenious fraud perpetrated in 1381 by University College for the purposes of a lawsuit.) But on the evidence of the earliest documents which speak of the University as being in existence it is possible to conjecture, more or less accurately, what were the circumstances which gave it birth.

The earliest document which gives any detailed information about Oxford—the *Domesday Book*—records that at the time of the Norman Conquest the bulk of its inhabitants were ecclesiastics, and since in those days learning was practically a monopoly of the clergy, it may

be conjectured that even in Saxon times boys were sent to Oxford to be taught. Possibly because of its central position and because, being a walled city, it was free from disturbances caused by the strife of quarrelsome barons, Oxford under the Norman kings contained a great number of men who came there to teach and boys who were sent there to be taught. As its reputation as a seat of learning grew, it is probable that men who had more impudence than scholarship set up schools and competed unfairly against better qualified men. Whether this was so or not, the scholars assembled at Oxford formed themselves some time during the twelfth century into a self-governing body, a guild or university, elected a leader known at first as Rector Scholarum and afterwards as Chancellor, and issued licenses in the form of degrees to those of their number who proved themselves qualified to teach the recognised subjects—Canon Law, Arts, and Theology.

It was an age in which men groped blindly after knowledge, probing half-fearfully the sciences of infidel Saracen and Jew, doubting whether the wisdom of Aristotle was not a trap set by Satan to ensnare the souls of orthodox Churchmen, yet gradually gaining courage and daring to read and think for themselves. The pursuit of knowledge was handicapped in a hundred ways. Learning had so little commercial value, that those who devoted themselves to it for its own sake

rather than in hopes of obtaining preferment in the Church, knew that by so doing they were condemning themselves to a life of poverty. They had to fight against ignorance, apathy, and superstition. Roger Bacon, the greatest of all Oxford's scholars, as a Franciscan friar was forbidden the use of books, and could obtain the pen, ink, and parchment with which he wrote his *Magnum Opus* only by special permission of the Pope, a permission which was prompted more by idle curiosity than from any love of knowledge. His experiments in optics and chemistry brought him under suspicion of being in league with the devil. He had constructed, said popular rumour, a brazen head that had the power of speech and was doubtless inhabited by his familiar spirit. When with inconceivable labour and under every disadvantage he produced an encyclopædic work that embraced the result of his lifelong studies and experiments, a work that included treatises on mathematics, geography, prosody, metre, logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, and an introduction to the study of Greek, that discussed the relation between theology and philosophy, and the errors that had crept into current interpretation of the Scriptures—when, in fact, he had set down in writing practically all that it was possible for a man of his period to know, the work attracted so little attention that a hundred years seem to have passed before anyone read it. Bacon founded no

school, left no disciple to carry on his work. His *Magnum Opus* was so far in advance of his age that a passage stolen from it many years afterwards and incorporated in the *Imago Mundi* first gave Columbus the idea that China might be reached by sailing westwards.

Scholarship had to contend, too, with material difficulties. Without instruments or mathematical tables it was practically impossible for science to make any headway, and these, said Bacon, "are not to be found among the Latins, and could not be made for two or three hundred pounds. Besides, better tables are indispensably necessary, tables on which the motions of the heavens are certified from the beginning to the end of the world without daily labour, but these tables are worth a king's ransom, and could not be made without a vast expense. I have often attempted the composition of such tables, but could not finish them through failure of means and the folly of those whom I had to employ." Books were scarcely less difficult to procure. Few of the Greek classics had been translated into Latin, and very few Oxford men of this period knew any Greek. The works of the ancient classic writers were scarce and costly. Bacon caused enquiries to be made throughout Europe for copies of Seneca's works and Cicero's *de Republica*, and though he persevered in the search for twenty years he was unsuccessful. So highly were books prized by the Oxford schoolmen that Richard

of Bury said it was more easy to gain their favour by presents of books than by gifts of money. "What pleasantness of teaching there is in books," he wrote in his *Philobiblon*. "They are masters who instruct us without rod or ferule. If you approach them, they are not asleep; if you enquire of them, they do not withdraw themselves; they never chide, when you make mistakes; they never laugh, if you are ignorant." It is difficult to realise the difficulties of the junior student of this period, compelled to approach all branches of knowledge through the medium of a half-dead language which he had to acquire with little help from lexicon or grammar. Probably the system of teaching by lectures still adopted at Oxford is a survival of the time when the scarcity of books rendered oral instruction necessary.

Another cause that tended to hamper scholarship and check the development of the University was the constant rioting that took place both between clerks and townsmen and among the members of the University themselves. It sometimes happened that in consequence of such riots large bodies of students agreed to leave Oxford and settle down in some place where they could work in greater peace. One such migration which took place during the reign of King John was largely instrumental in founding the University of Cambridge. Another took place in the reign of Henry III, when a

number of Oxford students went to Northampton and joined themselves to a number of Cambridge men who had migrated there three years before. This infant University was forcibly dissolved in consequence of its members having offered armed resistance to the King when he besieged the town. In Edward the Third's reign also a number of Oxford graduates, worsted, according to one account, in a faction riot, or, according to another account, in a fight with their own pupils, migrated to Stamford and would have founded a University there but for the jealous opposition of the parent University, which meanly appealed to the King for help, and exacted from all its Masters of Arts an oath, still imposed in the nineteenth century, that they would not lecture there. Even when Merton College was founded, the possibility of its deciding to migrate to another University was taken into consideration by its founder, who provided for such a contingency by buying house property in Cambridge.

To realise the chaos and riot that prevailed in mediæval Oxford one must imagine a town of which half the inhabitants are boys, between the ages of ten and twenty,[1] who are practically their own masters, boys who can fight, steal eatables, break windows, play practical jokes on unhappy citizens, and make nuisances

[1] The average age of mediæval students at Oxford was considerably less than that of modern undergraduates.

of themselves generally without fear of parental or magisterial whackings. Some of the students in mediæval Oxford lived in Halls, the heads of which were licensed by the University, and were thus under a certain degree of restraint; but the head of a Hall derived a pecuniary profit from its inhabitants, and if he were strict he might see his boarders betake themselves to another Hall where the University statutes were more lightly regarded. The rest of the students lived in private chambers, and were under practically no restraint whatever. They were under the authority of the Proctors, but of what use are two Proctors among three thousand undisciplined boys? It was impossible for the University to make any great headway while discipline was so lax, and while there was danger at any moment that a large proportion of its members might desert it in favour of some other town. A new development, however, rather by chance than by design, gradually strengthened it, and enabled it to take firm and abiding root in Oxford.

During the latter part of the reign of Henry III a moss-trooper named John de Balliol, who lived just north of the Tweed and maintained his family in comfort by looting cattle from the English side of the border, had the misfortune to be caught by one of the militant bishops appointed by the King to guard his northern frontiers. As a punishment for having "unjustly vexed

BALLIOL COLLEGE FROM THE GARDEN

and enormously damnified" the northern churches of England, the bishop, who seems to have been a muscular Christian, compelled John de Balliol to kneel at the door of Durham Abbey and receive a flogging from his own episcopal hands. Furthermore, before he was released, the captive baron was made to swear that he would provide a perpetual maintenance for certain poor scholars in the University of Oxford. John de Balliol kept his oath, but, as was to be expected since it was forced from him, in no very generous spirit. He hired a house in Oxford wherein he lodged four poor students, for whose keep he paid a sum that allowed eightpence[1] apiece every week. Twenty years later his widow permanently endowed "The House of Balliol," raised the students' weekly commons to elevenpence, and—here one seems to trace the origin of many ancient jests against the Scots—enjoined them to live temperately.

At about the same time the Bishop of Durham bequeathed a sum of 310 marks, the interest of which was to support ten or more Masters of Arts, a bequest which led to the purchase of a hall, the first one not privately owned, from which grew University College. At about the same time Walter de Merton, Bishop of Rochester and Chancellor of England, founded Merton College for the benefit principally of his nephews

[1] Eightpence in the thirteenth century was equivalent, according to Hallam, to about sixteen shillings in modern money.

and their descendants, and failing these for men from the see of Winchester. This was the first real college, for it was to be self-governing. If its members could not agree, their "commons" or food allowance was to be stopped until they did. University and Balliol soon afterwards adopted the policy of self-government, and this has been the policy more or less of every college founded since. Within the next hundred years three more colleges were founded—Exeter, Oriel, and Queen's—and the University began to take the rank among British institutions which it enjoys to-day. With the growth of the colleges discipline improved, for an ever-increasing number of students lived under the eye of authority. The danger of migrations, too, gradually disappeared, for house property is not portable.

There was another cause at work which turned the University from a mere guild of schoolmasters not only into a great mother of learning, but into a force which was profoundly to affect the history of England. The University was essentially democratic. It honoured a man not for the quarterings on his shield or the number of retainers who rode in his train, but for his ability and scholarship. Whereas outside the University a layman had to obey his feudal lord and a priest his spiritual superior, within it each man had an equal share with his fellows in making the rules which he was to obey. There grew up in consequence a spirit of independence

as disastrous to the feudal system as it was to the supremacy of the Pope. University College contributed a large part of its initial capital to assist the Barons in their revolt against despotism. Men passed from Merton to influential positions in the Church determined to contest the right of the Pope to levy taxes on English freemen and bestow the richest English benefices on his foreign favourites. And the great schoolmen, claiming the right of every man to think for himself, breathed a new spirit into an age that was fettered by obsolete dogmas.

Walter Map was one of the earliest of Oxford's Church reformers, though by an unkind chance he was best known to the younger of his contemporaries as the author of a rollicking drinking song. In a Latin poem, in which he satirised the vices of the monks, he put into the mouth of an abbot, whose face was "as purple as his wines," the following lines :—

> "Meum est propositum in taberna mori :
> Vinum sit appositum morientis ori,
> Ut dicant cum venerint angelorum chori,
> 'Deus sit propitius huic potatori!'"

which have been translated as follows :—

> "Die I must, but let me die drinking at an inn!
> Hold the wine cup to my lips sparkling from the bin!
> So, when angels flutter down to take me from my sin,
> 'Ah, God have mercy on this sot,' the cherubs will begin!"

The pious author, too faithful to his subject, had given such a lilt and swing to this verse that it rapidly became popular as a drinking song among men who knew nothing of the purpose for which it was written. One may imagine Walter Map's feelings at seeing, as he may often have seen, a drunken student reeling across Carfax and trolling out the lively ditty, "Meum est propositum," etc.

Robert Grosseteste, scholar, author, logician, and head of the University, did more than scourge the vices of the clergy, for he crossed swords with the Pope himself. Saint Edmund of Abingdon, though in later life he abandoned scholarship as worldly, helped to broaden men's knowledge by introducing Aristotle to the Oxford schools. Bacon impoverished himself in his search after the truths of natural science. The brilliance and originality of Duns Scotus and William of Ockham won for the Oxford University the intellectual supremacy hitherto enjoyed by its older rival in Paris, and Wycliffe, Fellow of Merton and Master of Balliol, the last of the schoolmen, struck the first blow in the great fight for freedom of thought which was to shake England to its foundations.

In his revolt against the traditions of the past Wycliffe was the mouthpiece of an intellectual movement that had been growing in Oxford for two hundred years. The tenets which he preached were those of the majority of

his colleagues. When the Church denounced him, Oxford supported him. When the Pope ordered the University to arrest and condemn him, it ignored the command. When Archbishop Courtenay commanded the Chancellor to dismiss a Lollard preacher for omitting the Pope's name from the Bidding Prayer, the Chancellor not only allowed the Lollard to take his degree as Doctor of Divinity, but confirmed his appointment as University preacher and ostentatiously attended his sermons. When Archbishop Arundel came to Oxford to enforce the suppression of Lollardism, he was driven back by a mob of armed scholars headed by the Proctors and the Chancellor himself. This revolt signified not so much that the University was Lollard, as that it would not submit to dictation, nor have its freedom to regulate its own affairs interfered with by the head of the Church in England or even the Pope himself. By its resistance to the Church's decrees the University showed that it had grown from a mere guild of schoolmasters into one of the most powerful organisations in England.

V

THE DAILY ROUND, THE COMMON TASK

TO obtain an idea of the daily life of the mediæval Oxford student we are largely dependent on the statutes of the University and of the older colleges. We may presume that the students did more or less that which the statutes enjoined them to do, and we may conjecture with almost equal certainty, human nature being what it is, that they did that which the statutes said they were not to do, for the framers of the *Statuta et Decreta* would not have gone out of their way to forbid practices for which the students had no inclination.

The life of the Oxford student in the Middle Ages, like that of everyone else from king to peasant, was, compared with modern standards of comfort, a hard one. He rose early, for lectures began at six o'clock in summer and seven in winter. There is strong presumptive evidence that he washed if he felt inclined to do so, for the inventories of the furniture of the older colleges mention leaden water-troughs, placed in some cases in the hall, in others out of doors. Those who were devoutly disposed rose earlier than the others in order to attend Mass

before lectures began, but there is no mention of compulsory chapel before the foundation of New College in 1379.

Breakfast was not a recognised meal until the fifteenth century, and then it was regarded more or less as an indulgence for the sybarite or the weakling. But as some of the old statutes especially forbid access to the kitchen "for the purpose of eating," we may conjecture, first, that it was permissible for a man to go there to warm himself; and secondly, that being there he occasionally took the opportunity of cadging a morsel from the cook.

Lectures were held, some in the different chapels of St. Mary's, some in rooms hired by the lecturers, for the University possessed no buildings of its own (except part of the church) until 1480. Lecture-rooms must have been cold places in winter, for until the introduction of chimneys it was possible to have fires only in lofty halls, where there was plenty of room for the smoke to rise, and the danger of furniture catching light was small. Fur-lined hoods, such as are now worn only with full academical dress to indicate the degree that the wearer has taken, probably served a more practical purpose in unwarmed and draughty lecture-rooms. The lecturer who had straw strewn on his floor sufficiently deep to cover cold feet probably attracted more pupils than one who was more economical. Every student was allowed

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to choose for himself whose lectures he would attend, with the result that lecturers in search of pupils, or rather of pupils' fees, were not ashamed to tout for the patronage of freshmen, and a statute enjoined that no student was to be obliged to pay a lecturer's fees until he had had three days' fair trial of his abilities.

Dinner took place between ten and eleven in the morning, and consisted of "byefe hauing a few porage made of the brothe of the same byefe wyth salte and otemeal," and beer, the common drink of all old and young who could not afford wine in an age when tea, coffee, and filters were alike unknown. Many colleges brewed and still brew their own beer. If those who drink beer think beer, then Queen's men think "jolly good thoughts," as Amyas Leigh would say. After dinner the students lingered in the hall and held "disputations" for an hour. This exercise was more a social than a scholastic one, and any "honest" topic might be introduced, provided the disputants spoke only in Latin. A fine of a halfpenny was imposed on anyone who spoke in the vulgar tongue, a regulation which was not so ridiculous as it seems at first sight, for Latin was the most convenient common language for men who, coming from Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, spoke different languages, and a freshman from Yorkshire would not easily understand a West-countryman until each had learnt to avoid the provincialisms of his own dialect.

After the post-prandial disputation the students scattered for the afternoon. Not a few probably went to their rooms to work, for the example of the great schoolmen probably inspired a number of pupils and disciples. We hear more about the rowdy element in mediæval Oxford not because it was more typical of Oxford life, but because it made itself more conspicuous than did the hard-reading party. Some of the poorer scholars earned money by copying manuscripts for their seniors, or for wealthy freshmen who could afford the luxury of private copies of the classics. Some compiled mathematical tables, though to do this needed special education. In our day, when arithmetic is regarded as one of the absolutely essential bases of the most meagre education, it is hard to realise that many a man who could construe Aristotle could only find out what seventeen times five amounted to by writing down the larger number five times over and adding up the total. A proportion of those who were to take priest's orders had to know enough arithmetic to enable them to calculate the dates of the movable feasts, and special arrangements were made to enable those who had charge of the accounts of their respective halls or colleges to acquire a knowledge of the science, but for the mass of the students it was regarded as a superfluous branch of knowledge. As late as the end of the sixteenth century we find statutes of public schools that mention arithmetic as a subject that

may be taken at the discretion of the master for one hour each week "for the recreation of the boys"; and even in the days of the Commonwealth the science was so much neglected that Pepys had entered the public service before he ever heard of the multiplication table.

It is amusing to contrast the behaviour of the mediæval student as it actually was with the ideal conduct prescribed for him by the University's pious benefactors. The saintly old gentlemen to whom the older colleges owe their existence seem to have entirely forgotten their own youth, or to have imagined that they could manufacture saints out of ordinary men by devising statutes of prohibitions. Like the curate of Spifton-extra-Super, of whom Sir W. S. Gilbert sang—

> "Wild croquet Hooper banned
> And all the sports of Mammon.
> He warred with cribbage and
> He exorcised backgammon,"

they seem to have regarded recreation as not only unnecessary, but positively iniquitous. Would William of Wykeham be pleased or shocked if one came to him in the Elysian Fields and told him that the boat crew of the college he founded has never during the last quarter of a century fallen lower than the third place on the river?

In some of the colleges students were forbidden to

leave their own walls except for the purpose of attending lectures, to which they were to go in a body, walking decorously two and two, crocodile fashion, like the young ladies of Miss Pinkerton's Academy. Tennis, fives, and all games played with a bat and ball were banned as soon as they came into fashion, though some of the more liberal statutes permitted the use of a soft ball within college grounds.

It is natural that the animal spirits of the students revolted against such compulsory asceticism, and led them to commit excesses for which they would have had less inclination had they been allowed to work off their superfluous energy in a natural way. On days when no one had had the public spirit to get up a town-and-gown row many students walked the streets of the town deliberately looking for trouble on their own account, and hoping to find some excuse for breaking a colleague's head. If one student assaulted another so that the blood flowed he was fined anything up to six shillings and eightpence, provided, of course, that the offence came to the knowledge of the authorities. If he killed his man (the records of coroners' inquests show that innumerable cases occurred of students being killed in private quarrels), he fled, and probably continued his interrupted studies at Cambridge. In such a case the University authorities promptly took steps to find out if he had left any property behind him. If he had, they confiscated it.

If he had not, there was nothing to be done, for there was no mediæval equivalent of Scotland Yard.

Other students gave vent to their superfluous energies in more peaceful but, to judge by the tariff of pains and penalties, equally insubordinate ways. As a considerable number of them had scarcely entered their teens, it is reasonable to suppose that some amused themselves with leap-frog, hide-and-seek (which must have been good sport in the narrow lanes of mediæval Oxford), touch-last, or some other juvenile game. Hide-and-seek, perhaps, especially appealed to them, as they must sometimes have seen it played in deadly earnest when a student who had had the misfortune to kill another one, and was hard-pressed by the dead man's friends, was creeping along bye-ways and racing across open spaces in an endeavour to reach the sanctuary afforded by the altar in St. Mary's Church before he was caught. As the statutes expressly forbade hawking and hunting with dogs, we may infer that mediæval students were fond of sport. The richer ones, perhaps, kept horse, hawk, and hound at some inn on the outskirts of the town where there was little risk of meeting a Proctor, and rode out in the afternoons to try for a hare or a partridge in the meadows around Abingdon, or even for a deer in the Royal forests at Shotover or Woodstock. Poorer sportsmen, unable to keep a horse or bribe any forest-ranger who might catch them, probably

contented themselves in a humbler way with snaring rabbits.

Dancing, a common feature of every village festival at that period, was popular among Oxford students, though, of course, the company of female partners was out of the question. It is curious that this is practically the only recreation on which the authorities looked with more or less tolerant eye. A scholar in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is described as dancing "after the scole of Oxenforde," and William of Wykeham, the founder of New College, seems tacitly to have recognised it as a lawful amusement if enjoyed in a suitable place, for he expressly forbade "dancing, wrestling, or other incautious games" in chapel. The prohibition seems to have been dictated by fear of damage to the chapel furniture rather than regard for the sanctity of the place. The idea that a man's conduct in a sacred building should be as decorous at all times as when Divine service is being held is a growth of a much later date. The muddy jests of the *terrae filius*, or licensed jester, with which University functions were enlivened, do not seem to have been regarded as out of place in St. Mary's Church, where for a long time the *Encænia* was held.

Supper was eaten in hall at five o'clock (except on fast days, when it was omitted altogether), after which the law-abiding members of the University lingered to warm

themselves at the hall fire (which, except the kitchen fire, was the only one in the college) and to indulge in such amusements as the statutes permitted. The rest tippled at taverns, or roamed the streets bullying Jews, insulting townspeople, or fighting with each other. Owing to the impossibility of warming small rooms and the expense of candlelight, private reading after dark was practically out of the question, and a large number of students must in consequence have gathered round the hall fire on winter nights. The authorised amusements in the hall consisted of "singing or reading chronicles of the realm and wonders of the world." Disputations, more frivolous probably than those organised by the authorities, were sometimes held. That a certain amount of "ragging" or "hazing" also went on appears from records of initiative ceremonies which unhappy freshmen had to undergo, and from a New College statute which forbade "struggling, chorus-singing, dancing, leaping, singing, shouting, tumult, and inordinate noise; pouring forth of water, beer, and all other liquids, and tumultuous games" in hall, lest the noise should disturb those who had their quarters underneath.

When curfew rang at nine o'clock the "poor students" or servitors brought in a light supper of bread and beer, and those of the students who were not still dodging the Proctor in the streets groped their way to bed. In Queen's, and perhaps at other colleges also, there was a thoughtful provision to prevent students being distressed with doubts

as to whether it were time to get up. The night-watchman at intervals during the night whistled on a reed-pipe, in order that the students might know "when it was better to sleep and when to work"! Men's nerves must have been stronger in mediæval times than they are to-day.

VI

LONELIEST, LOVELIEST, EXQUISITE

"All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil."

OF all Oxford's comely plaisances who shall say which is most beautiful? Each, offering some peculiar charm of shady sinuous walk or velvet lawn, some romantic association with an old time entombed, silently claims to be the fairest.

If the pagan goddesses, who quarrelled in so unseemly a fashion over a golden apple, were asked to decide, Hera might choose Christchurch's magnificent quadrangle, haunted by memories of men who left their mark on English history; Pallas might prefer Magdalen's stately groves, beloved of Addison; and Aphrodite undoubtedly would give her vote to Merton gardens for the sake of the gay wanton throng of beauties which enlivened it when the laughter-loving King had his Court at Oxford. If Pan

MAGDALEN COLLEGE NEW BUILDINGS ADJOINING
MAGDALEN GROVES

VI

LOVELIEST, LOVELIEST, EXQUISITE

were appointed judge, he would give the palm to the grounds of Worcester College, for if, wearied with trudging over dusty high roads and nauseated with the smell of petrol, worn out with wandering over scarred hillsides among factory-darkened valleys and in attenuated woods that bristle with barbed wire and notice-boards, he chanced to pause there, he would find his old playmates, the Naiades, peeping at him from behind the trees. There he would find fair smooth lawns shaded with stately chestnuts and bordered with gorgeous flowers; or, if his heart yearned for a resting-place more like those in which his youth was passed, he might lie half-hidden among the tall grasses that fringe a lake whose surface, broken only by ripples made by the breast of a gliding swan, makes an inverted picture of flowers and stately trees and blue sky. He might doze there all day, listening lazily to the click of bat on ball in the neighbouring cricket-field, undisturbed unless some kindred spirit, carrying perhaps a book of verses or paint-box and easel, came and sat beside him.

It was, perhaps, of the lake in Worcester gardens that Calverley, whose career at Balliol before he was sent down was brief but brilliant, wrote—

> " By the wide lake's margin I marked her lie—
> The wide, weird lake where the alders sigh—
> A young fair thing, with a shy soft eye;

> And I deemed that her thoughts had flown
> To her home, and her brethren, and sisters dear,
> As she lay there watching the dark, deep mere,
> All motionless, all alone."

Calverley pretended that the "fair, young thing" he saw was a water-rat, but that was because he was tired of being misunderstood by an unimaginative generation. What he really saw, there can be no doubt, was a Naiad.

In addition to natural beauty, Worcester gardens have the charm of association with the dim past. In one corner there is a row of quaint old cottages, older than Worcester College, older even than Gloucester Hall which preceded it, for they originally formed part of the monastic Hall founded within five years of the foundation of Merton for the accommodation of thirteen Benedictine monks selected from the rest of their Order to study in the schools of mediæval Oxford. Carved in the stone above the door of each of the cottages or "mansiones" there may still be seen a battered design, a coat-of-arms or rebus. These are too indistinct to be deciphered, but since in the case of one of them the letter "W" may clearly be seen on a shield, and since this letter may possibly stand for Winchcombe Abbey, it is conjectured that each door was originally distinguished by the arms of the abbey that had the right to lodge one of its members there.

These buildings carry us back to the time when all other members of the University were lodged, not as they are to-day in a score of stately colleges, but in a hundred ramshackle tenements that have long since crumbled to dust. The wealthy Benedictines, however, jealous for the honour of their Order, chose a site far removed from the din and tumult of the crowded city, and built so well that the old "mansiones" are still habitable.

The Benedictine members of the University contributed little to its reputation for scholarship. They may have been sent there to rival the influence of the Franciscans who did so much towards making it the intellectual power that it became. Perhaps their situation had something to do with their failure to distinguish themselves. Whereas the Franciscans established themselves in the poorest and most thickly populated part of the town, the Hall of the Benedictines was some distance beyond its walls and set among the meadows that girdled the town. It is easier for a man to concentrate his attention on the logic of Aristotle or the Topics of Boethius if his study window looks out on to a blank wall, than if through his casement may be seen a leafy sun-kissed oak in whose branches a blackbird sits and sings his careless theory of philosophy, "Carpe diem, carpe diem!" There was no formal garden in the days of the Benedictines, but the freshness and greenery were there. The lark sang of the joy of life, and the thrush called the young monk away from his parch-

ments. "We knew it, we knew it! Be quick, be quick! Come here, dear! Be quick, be quick!" Who could work strenuously when the thrushes are calling him away to play?

The Benedictines' Hall did not escape bluff King Hal's zeal for ecclesiastical reform, and its revenues passed into the Royal purse. Its buildings, under the name of Gloucester Hall, housed scholars again in the reign of his great daughter Elizabeth. At this time they had the melancholy honour of sheltering the dead body of poor Amy Robsart, wife of the Earl of Leicester, which lay in state there awaiting burial in St Mary's Church. Whether or not her death was brought about to serve the odious ambition of her husband is a question which history has not yet decided, but contemporary Oxford had so little doubt in the matter that the man who preached her funeral sermon in St. Mary's referred to her as having been "pitifully murdered."

The most famous member of Gloucester Hall at this period was Thomas Allen, mathematician, astrologer, chemist, and reputed necromancer. His reputation as a dabbler in the Black Art was, perhaps, due to his servitor pupil, who, in order to save his master from being interrupted at work, used to warn intending visitors that they were liable at any time to meet "spirits coming up the stairs like bees" to help him in his devilish work. There is no record of Allen's suffer-

THE "MANSIONES" IN WORCESTER COLLEGE: A RELIC OF THE HALL OF THE BENEDICTINE MONKS

ing any accident more disastrous than an occasional burnt finger such as any experimenting chemist must expect, but one of his pupils, thinking that he had discovered an ointment which would make a woman perpetually beautiful, tried it on his wife with fatal results to the lady.

A later member of Gloucester Hall was Richard Lovelace, the author of the lines—

> "I could not love thee, dear, so much
> Loved I not Honour more,"

which he sent to his lady-love when taking up arms on behalf of King Charles. Later, when imprisoned for presenting a Royalist petition to Cromwell's Parliament, he wrote to another lady (his heart was large enough to cherish affection for a number of maidens) the immortal lines—

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage."

Lovelace, according to Anthony Wood, became a gentleman-commoner of Gloucester Hall in 1634 at the age of sixteen, "being then accounted the most amiable and beautiful person that ever eye beheld: a person also of innate modesty, virtue and courtly development, which made him then, but especially after, when he retired to the great city much admired and adored by the fair sex.

In 1636, when the King and Queen were for some days entertained at Oxford, he was, at the request of a great lady belonging to the Queen made to the Archbishop of Canterbury [Laud], then Chancellor of the University, actually created, among other persons of quality, Master of Arts, though but of two years' standing." The University is too dull and prosaic nowadays to give Master's Degrees to boys of eighteen in recognition of personal beauty. It was more human in the days when Charles I brought his Court to Oxford, and every college and hall joined in entertaining merry long-ringleted Cavaliers, and

> "Slight she-slips of loyal blood,
> And others, passing praise,
> Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
> For puritanic stays."

Lovelace was described by one of his contemporaries as Scholar, Souldier, Lover and Saint. Lover and soldier he certainly was. Scholar he may have been, though we lack corroborative evidence of the fact, and his verses seem to show that he was more in his element in a lady's bower than in a study. As for his saintship—! Posterity may, perhaps, give the benefit of the doubt to one whose personality must have been singularly charming.

Worcester has exercised less influence than some of the

Worcester College front Quadrangle

other colleges on the history of the University, because it is one of the youngest. Until recent years it could only be reached from the town by narrow lanes, and the Vice-Chancellor, when he visited the college in state attended by Mace and Bedels, had to dodge among squalling babies and duck under clothes-lines. The college's remoteness from the centre of the city has led to its being nicknamed "Botany Bay" by undergraduates who are jealous of its beautiful surroundings. Lest anyone should think that the name suits the members, the dictum of Mr. Stedman, of Wadham, may be quoted. In his *Oxford: its Social and Intellectual Life*, this authority declared that Worcester contained "many pleasant undergraduates," a tribute calculated to bring a glow of manly pride to the cheek of every Worcester man!

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VII

CONCERNING PROCTORS

"Said the Powers that be, 'We have often heard tell,
That a thief makes the best of all thief-takers.'"

Le Roi Loire in *The Undergraduate.*

. . . . . .

"'Siste per fidem,' shouted the Proctor,
"'Curre per Jovem,' replied the undergraduate, buttoning his coat and starting to run."

Cox's *Recollections of Oxford.*

THE University of Oxford, being a corporation of men united to advance scholarship, must needs have a head. The nominal ornamental head is the Chancellor, whose principal duty is to come to Oxford for the Commemoration ceremony and declaim to the best of his ability in the Latin tongue remarks grave and gay that have been prepared for him by some more erudite subordinate. The actual working head is the Vice-Chancellor, but since properly to supervise such a vast organisation the head of the University would often have to be in three places at once, the Vice-Chancellor keeps

in his own hands such work as he can perform in the comfort of his study, and delegates a great deal of that which must be done out of doors to two younger and more active officials called in the University statutes Procuratores, in formal English Proctors, and familiarly by those who love them Progginses.

What exactly are the duties and the powers of a Proctor is said to be a secret locked in the proctorial bosom. In ancient times, when students at Oxford were divided into two parties, Northerners and Southerners, between which constant war raged both in the streets and in the schools, the Chancellor chose one Proctor from each faction to represent its interests and preserve discipline among its unruly members. The rival parties have long since amalgamated and forgotten their feuds, but the number of Proctors holding office at any one time remains the same to-day as in the time when a Scotsman could not meet an Englishman in the seclusion of Turl Gate Street without wishing to break his head. Now-a-days the Proctors, among other duties, read (or find someone else to read) the Litany at St. Mary's at the beginning of term, take part in the supervision of such diverse studies as Music, Scientific Engineering, and Indian History, see that no undergraduate drives without a license, share the responsibility of safeguarding the University seals, administer oaths to Examiners and to Clerks of the Market, and support the University

revenues by fining undergraduates. In addition to these duties, they exercise the peculiar privileges as to the control of the streets which the University won in Plantagenet times. The Proctors are in fact the University personified.

The duty of extorting money from hapless undergraduates is the one which engages most of the Proctor's attention. Every night—for, like other birds of prey, he is most active when gathering darkness affords a cloak for his deeds—concealing his person in the folds of a black gown, he sallies out into the town to search for his prey. Woe betide the undergraduate who crosses his path! Lifting his cap—the malignant suavity of the Proctor is said to be one of his most objectionable attributes—he will enquire, "Are you a member of the University, sir?" On receiving an answer in the affirmative he will then take a note of his victim's name and college, and dismiss him with a request to be honoured with a call at nine o'clock on the following morning. At the appointed hour the victim calls, and is told that he has infringed one of the University statutes. These statutes are written in Latin in order to discourage undergraduates from eluding the Proctor's rapacity by finding out what they may and what they may not do. They are also so framed that the man must be a cross between an anchorite and a mummy who can live a term at the 'Varsity without infringing them. They ordain

among other things that an undergraduate must not purchase food from townspeople, must return to his college before the great bell in Christ Church Tower, colloquially known as "Great Tom," sounds the curfew at nine o'clock, and must on all occasions when he appears in public wear academic dress. In practice these rules are not strictly enforced. An undergraduate sipping afternoon tea in a public café need not hide under the table if the Proctor comes into the room, nor is it necessary for men who row or play cricket to encumber themselves with cap and gown, for during the afternoon the Proctor regards those over whom he has authority with the indulgent eye of a man and a brother. After nine o'clock in the evening, however, he steels his heart and relentlessly "progs" any undergraduate he sees who may be guilty of the double offence of being out of doors and without his cap and gown.

The result is that as he paces down the street the crowd parts before him, and a number of men, clothed in everyday garb and wearing nothing (save a guilty look) to distinguish them from ordinary townsfolk, scatter like rabbits into the many alleys with which Oxford abounds. Should the Proctor catch any one of them either by his own prowess or that of one of his mercenary subordinates, known colloquially as "bull-dogs," he will bid him to his reception on the following morning and extort from him a fine of five shillings or thereabouts,

which is paid over to what is called the University "chest."

The name by which the University's banking account is known is an interesting relic of mediæval times. When it came into possession of its first recorded revenue—the fine paid by the town for the hanging of two innocent gownsmen—the money was placed in a chest lodged for security in the Priory of St. Frideswyde. Other moneys were added when pious benefactors, many of whose names are mentioned in the bidding prayer read every Sunday morning in St. Mary's Church, bequeathed cash or the rents of lands to the University's needs. Members of the University in need of temporary financial assistance were allowed to borrow money from the chest on the security of a pledge,[1] so that in olden days it contained, besides coin, daggers, drinking vessels, jewels, and a miscellaneous collection of such articles as had intrinsic value. These articles, if not redeemed within a year, were sold, and the money thus realised was returned to the chest. Thus the University's current banking account is now known by the name of the receptacle in which its cash was first stored.

The various periodical journals, edited by undergraduates for undergraduates, which frequently come

[1] If their need was urgent, impoverished clerks were sometimes allowed to borrow money without security on condition that they said a stipulated number of prayers for the repose of the soul of whoever founded the "chest."

The Cathedral Church of Christ (formerly St. Frideswyde's), from the Canon's Garden

into existence and live for a term or two, contain constant references to the Proctor's tyranny. The victim's indignation is often too hot to be expressed through the medium of cold prose, and therefore it usually finds vent in sonorous verse framed on the style of one of the English classics. The following verses taken from *The Undergraduate*, a weekly magazine now dead, written "for the amusement of undergraduates and the instruction of graduate members of the University," afford a fair specimen of the methods by which undergraduates who have been "progged" relieve their indignation :—

"Who, when I was an undergrad,
Robbed me of every sou I had,
For being like a Christian clad?
The Proctor.

Who as we wander down the street
Pursues us corpulent yet fleet,
That we at half-past nine may greet
The Proctor."

One cannot too greatly admire the modesty which prompted the author of these lines to remain anonymous! Another of *The Undergraduate's* correspondents asked if it were not enough that he had to go to chapel, hall, and lecture in a ridiculous antiquated dress, without being compelled when visiting a theatre to wear on his shoulders a garment that resembled nothing so much as

an inferior pillow-case used as a chimney-sweep's bag. Another with a legal bent wrote to say that he had been "progged" by a Proctor who had neglected to put on his white tie, thus himself infringing the statutes as to academic dress, and wished to know whether under the circumstances he would be justified in refusing to recognise his authority.

It may comfort erring undergraduates to know that on one occasion at least a Proctor was himself "progged." One Sunday evening, in the year 1723, the Vice-Chancellor took it into his head to assist the Proctors by perambulating the town. Towards midnight he raided a tavern and was surprised to find one of the Proctors, a Don of Merton, enjoying himself within. The tippling Proctor was promptly relieved of his duties.

On the grounds that a Proctor preaches pious exhortations to his victims when they visit him on the morning after being progged, the Proctors formerly appropriated and annually divided between themselves a sum of £100 bequeathed by a Dr. White to pay a Professor of Moral Philosophy. This gross abuse continued (according to G. V. Cox, the last man to hold the post of Esquire Bedel, who related the story in his *Recollections of Oxford*) until the year 1828, when Dr. White's ghost began to haunt the Proctor's office and enquire what had become of the funds that had been misappropriated for over two hundred years.

A good idea of the Proctor's various duties and the way he accomplishes them may be obtained from the following quotation from Mr. G. F. Forrest's *Misfits*. The Proctor is supposed to be speaking.

"He said, 'I hunt for caps and gowns
Along the busy streets,
And that is odd, for they are things
One very seldom meets;
But yet, if none at all there be,
I am not much distressed,
For with the ones I do not see
I fill my little chest.'

He sobbed and said, 'I try to get
A stock of useless knowledge,
I stop a man I've never met,
And ask his name and college.
And then I talk' (he twirled his thumbs)
'In such a pleasant way,
That very frequently he comes
To call on me next day.'

He said, 'I often interrupt
Untimely games of pills,
And people, who have clearly supped,
My presence always chills.
But this I do not do for fun,
Nor bits of toasted cheese,
And that reminds me I will take
Five shillings, if you please.'"

Then follows the victim's lament:—

"And now if e'er I chance to sing
Falsetto in the choir,
Or try to cure a hornet's sting
By poking up the fire,
Or if I stir reflectively
A cockatrice's nest,
I frequently begin to cry,
Because it brings before my eye
That aged man whose look was sly,
Who wore a white and starchy tie,
Who prowled with stealth about the High,
Molesting all the passers-by,
Whose manner was polite and dry,
Who did not trouble to reply
To any ordinary lie,
Who robbed me with a patient sigh
Under that cloudless summer sky,
A-sitting on a chest."

The Proctor, again like other predatory beasts, has his good nights and his bad nights. On occasion undergraduates are so virtuous or so quick-sighted that he can hardly find excuse for adding a single half-crown to the University chest. On other occasions his vigilance is rewarded with most gratifying results. Sometimes on a winter evening he receives a telegram from Bletchley Junction informing him that a college football team, on

its way back from playing against a Cambridge team, has stolen the station bell. If he can reach the railway-station in time to meet the train that brings the team back to Oxford, he makes a splendid haul. Sometimes he raids a public-house bar, with rich results, for the University statutes especially ordain that "Scholars of whatsoever degree shall keep away from all Lodging-Houses, Inns, Wineshops and all houses whatsoever within the Precincts of the University in which wine or any other drink or the nicotian herb, otherwise tobacco, is usually sold, except from a necessary and urgent cause to be approved by the Vice-Chancellor."

A story is told of a man who, on being discovered by the proggins in a public-house bar, made a futile effort to escape and fell headlong on the floor, where he lay kicking and struggling among the overturned chairs. "Your name and college, sir?" enquired the Proctor. "Save the women and children," replied the undergraduate. "I can swim."

It seems that Proctors never raid tobacconists' shops. Presumably since they, as members of the University, are debarred equally with undergraduates from the use of the "herba nicotiana vel tobacco," they feel that if they took advantage of this clause in the statutes they would be morally bound themselves to refrain from the soothing weed.

In the lawless days when inter-collegiate riots were of

common occurrence, the Proctor's office was no sinecure. Laud, afterwards the famous Archbishop, was Proctor in 1603, and was so unpopular that he was heartily hissed when he formally resigned his office in the Convocation House. It seems that in the bad old days it was necessary for the Proctors to protect themselves from acts of revenge attempted by men whose hatred they had had the misfortune to incur. In 1520 leave was given to the senior Proctor to wear a dagger for his defence for two years following his year of office. The old custom, too, of providing the Proctor with an escort when, having formally resigned his office, he returned to his college, seems to indicate that it was once necessary to protect him from the violence of the mob.

Some interesting stories of Proctors and their duties are told in Cox's *Recollections of Oxford*. The author, whose acquaintance with the University began in 1789, remembered when one of the Proctor's duties was to parade the streets on a Sunday morning and drive undergraduates into St. Mary's Church. The two Proctors who held office in 1829 decided to chant the Litany at St. Mary's themselves instead of paying better qualified musicians to do it for them. (The University statutes of that day specifically ordained that the Litany was to be chanted in unison, unlike the present statutes which permit it to be read.) As neither of the Proctors had the remotest notion how to chant, and as they

absolutely failed to keep in touch with one another, the effect was very different from the one intended by those who initiated the ceremony. As an example of the arbitrary powers of Proctors, Cox mentions the case of a Proctor who, hearing that a petition in favour of removing disabilities from Roman Catholics was being signed by undergraduate members of the University, went to the shop where the petition lay and, finding that it had been signed by men who were still *in statu pupillari*, confiscated it. (*In statu pupillari* is a term applied by the statutes to undergraduates. It may be freely translated "in a state of puppyhood.")

Anthony Wood, a graduate of Merton, who spent his life in compiling a *History of the University*, at one time went in constant fear of the Proctor. Dr. Fell, the famous Dean of Christchurch, commissioned a man named Dick Peers to translate Wood's *History* into Latin. Peers impudently altered the text in places where Wood's political and religious opinions differed from those of Dr. Fell. This annoyed Wood so much that whenever he met Peers, which he often did when he went to drink his afternoon pint of ale at a tavern, he gave the dishonest translator "a bloody nose or a black eye." Wood had to curb his resentment, however, when Peers became a Proctor, and, says a chronicler, although Wood "be a good bowzeing blad, yet it hath been observed that never since his adversary

hath been in office hath he dared to be out after nine, least he should meet him and exact the rigour of the statute upon him."

Though the Proctors are mostly concerned to preserve discipline in the University, they have on occasion exerted themselves to uphold its privileges against outside interference. When Archbishop Arundel in 1411 laid the University under an interdict for Lollard practices, John Byrche, of Oriel, the Proctor for that year, broke open the door of St. Mary's and celebrated Mass as usual. When the Primate came to Oxford to assert his authority he was driven back by Byrche, who appeared at the head of a mob of armed students. The Archbishop in revenge denounced him, together with other Fellows of Oriel, to the King, accusing him of "habitual night-walking, of roystering in taverns, of breaking into college at night, and of knocking up the Provost at ten o'clock at night, calling him a liar, and challenging him to fight." It is distressing to add that Byrche had eventually to submit to the Archbishop's authority.

The Proctor's office is an honourable but not a very pleasant one. For a man of education to undertake duties such as are usually performed by ordinary police must require a high sense of duty, and probably few men undertake it who do not care more for the welfare of the University than for their own private gratification. Before closing the chapter, passing

reference should be made to the men known as "bull-dogs" who accompany the Proctors on their nightly rounds. With what feelings these men are regarded may be gathered from the following triumphal ode, quoted from *The Undergraduate*, in which the dismissal of a "bull-dog" is celebrated :—

"Ho! musicians sound the trumpet,
Catch the plaintive gong a smack,
Pick the fender up and thump it :—
There's a bull-dog got the sack.

Let us have a bonfire—(bless us,
Please to keep that bell a-wagging),
Send to Brasenose for Professors
Of the mystic art of 'ragging.'

First put sticks and light straw bands on :
Coal and coffee : chips and chairs :
All the mats you can lay hands on,
Doors and benches—blow repairs!

Burn old Thicksides! Burn the ghastly
Work of Liddell and of Scott ;
Burn the Lecture tables ; lastly,
Chuck the Dean upon the lot!

Up in blazes! Dance around it!
Yell till in the face you're black!
What a Jubilee! confound it—
There's a bull-dog got the sack."

VIII

THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward look, the land is bright."

JUST as the history of Oxford is the history of England in miniature, so its buildings are the history of English architecture carved in stone. The strong, dull, practical walls of St. Michael's Church recall the sturdy stupidity of our Saxon forefathers. The gloomy strength of Robert d'Oily's Norman tower reminds us of the days when men trembled under the iron rule of the Conqueror. Innumerable pieces of gorgeously ornate Gothic work testify to the fact that Englishmen of the Middle Ages, though they ate with their fingers, could appreciate beauty as well as the daintiest dilettante of the æsthetic school who cannot, without disgust, drink sherry from a claret

glass. The kingly dignity of Christchurch, nominally founded by the one English king who ruled his subjects with absolute despotic power, is a fitting memorial to the great Cardinal whose wealth and power became too great to be tolerated by a Tudor sovereign. The beautiful and stately fruit of Wren's and Inigo Jones's genius bears silent testimony to the greatness of an age that even civil war, religious acrimony, and the example of a wanton and selfish Court could not wholly mar. Even the dull stupidity of the Georgian era, when men ate and drank too much to think clearly, is commemorated in many places in which squat commonplace buildings destroy effects that would otherwise, though varied, be harmonious.

There is no more interesting period in English history than that in which the old English Church, the Church of Lanfranc and Becket, Arundel and William of Wykeham, was passing through a blaze of sunset glory to the dawn of a new day. Of this period the College of St. Mary Magdalen preserves an admirable and wonderfully consistent illustration. The churchmen of the fifteenth century loved dignity rather than daintiness. Magdalen, therefore, primarily designed as a school for churchmen, disdaining such rustic half-wild beauty as adorns Worcester College, or such variegated charms as grace Wadham or John's, has surrounded itself with such an atmosphere of stately calm and decorous peace as made

the mediæval monasteries havens of rest for those who wished to escape the din and strife of a turbulent age. Yet Magdalen wisely tempers its sobriety. It does not wholly disdain the charm of colour. Here and there the greyness of its walls is relieved by the bright hues of lilac and jasmine—

"gold-dusted snapdragon,
Sweet William with its homely cottage smell,"

geranium and carnation, but only so much floral beauty is allowed as will serve to accentuate the time-ripened dignity of the whole. Nowhere else, perhaps, could a better idea be obtained of what a fifteenth-century monastery was like. The monks of that period had for the most part managed to forget whatever vows of poverty had been imposed by the founders of the various religious orders, and Magdalen, with its massive buildings and herd of deer, such as lent dignity to the park and delicacy to the table of many a mediæval baron and abbot, conveys an impression of pious affluence rather than austere poverty.

The mediæval clergy had many devices, such as mysteries and miracle plays, for leading ignorant minds to a knowledge of holy things. One such was employed in Magdalen. Every year, on St. John the Baptist's Day, a sermon was delivered from an open-air pulpit, which still projects from the angle made by the chapel and the

outer wall, to a congregation which sat below in a quadrangle strewn with grass and rushes and decorated with green boughs, in the hope that those who listened to the sermon might realise the circumstances under which the Baptist preached in the wilderness.

Loitering in Magdalen, it is possible for an imaginative man to forget that it is and always was a college, and to fancy himself within the walls of one of those wealthy abbeys whose wealth excited the greed of Henry VIII, and inspired him with zeal for ecclesiastical reform. He may imagine that he sees lay brothers pass through the porter's lodge on their way to the kitchen, bearing baskets of salads, fruit and fish for Friday's dinner. Yeomen in leather jerkins come to pay their rents, and linger at the buttery to quaff a quart of audit ale before starting homeward. The abbot paces backwards and forwards discussing some matter of State with a knight who has just ridden from the Court. A bell rings, and long-gowned monks come one after another into the cloister, stretch arms that have become cramped with the delicate work of emblazoning missals, linger for a moment enjoying the sun, then hurry towards the hall, their eyes on the ground and their thoughts on their dinner.

Magdalen suggests such a picture because, though never a monastery, it was built on the plan of a monastery, was the last of the four colleges expressly founded for the training of priests who should defend the dignity

of the ancient Church from the attacks of Lollardism. Even when Wycliffe was at the height of his influence in Oxford a strong party in the University was opposed to his teachings. Even before Archbishop Arundel had attempted forcibly to suppress them, it had appointed a commission of the Heads of Colleges to root them out. Amid scenes of wild disorder, and despite the strenuous opposition of the Lollard party, Wycliffe's works had been burned at Carfax. But it found that without external aid it could not overpower those who claimed freedom of thought and freedom of speech, and consequently, when Arundel returned to the attack a second time supported by the authority of the King, the University yielded, and consented once again to be subordinate to the Church. At the end of Chapter IV we found the University at the height of its power and dignity forcibly resisting external interference. Had it maintained its position it would have become the most powerful factor in the realm, and probably the Reformation would have come a century earlier than it did. Split by dissension, however, it bartered its honour, its dignity, and its privileges for assistance in crushing among its own members a movement that was too advanced for a hide-bound age. In surrendering its privileges and its right to freedom of thought, it lost its reputation and its influence. Students soon realised that speculation, originality, and research hindered rather than helped an academic career, and that

those who wished to obtain advancement in the University and the Church had better follow the stereotyped path and adopt the conventional views of those in authority rather than think for themselves. All hope of a career was closed to those who would not accept conventional doctrines. Scholarship died. Oxford Latin became a jargon in which both idiom and grammar were ignored, and the few who tried to advance knowledge along unprohibited paths wasted their time in futile search for the Elixir of Life or the Philosopher's Stone.

The submission of the University, though it involved the abandonment of all claim to think and speak freely, was not wholly contemptible and servile. The teaching of Wycliffe, followed to its logical conclusion, necessitated the recognition of equal rights for all men, a theory grand in itself but impossible of realisation in an age that was still feudal. By awakening the poor to a sense of their undoubted wrongs it inspired them with blind hatred for wealth and authority. Its propagation was the cause of the Peasants' War, which, had it succeeded, would rapidly have reduced England to a hideous condition of anarchy; and though the University was democratic in constitution, it was too conservative at heart to welcome "red ruin and the breaking up of laws." It was seen that even in the University itself Wycliffe's sublime demand for liberty of thought had led to a claim on the part of some of its members for liberty of shameless action.

Though we must allow for the tendency of that, as of more enlightened ages, to attribute immorality to free thinkers, it must be admitted that the charges brought against Oxford Lollards of night-walking, tavern-haunting, riot, insubordination and vice, cannot be wholly disbelieved, for if worthy men refused to be bound by the statutes in spiritual things, lawless men might claim freedom of conduct in other matters.

Many of the charges brought against Lollards were, moreover, specific, whereas false accusations trumped up to support a charge of heresy would be more likely to be vague. A Fellow of Oriel, besides vague charges of being more often in a tavern than in chapel, was accused of purloining the key of his college so that he might indulge in midnight orgies without the knowledge of the Provost, of striking the Dean, of stabbing another Fellow with his dagger, and lastly of stealing and pawning manuscripts in his college library. Another Oriel man was accused of inciting a rabble of Bachelors to raid the Hall and carry off the Fellows' dinner, of stealing the library books, and of embezzling funds. The Provost and three Fellows of Queen's, one of whom helped Wycliffe to translate the Bible, when expelled from the University carried away with them as much of the property of their college as was portable. If a misuse of Wycliffe's doctrines gave men an excuse for lawlessness such as this, it was natural that those who loved law, order, and wholesome restraint

ENTRANCE TO ORIEL COLLEGE HALL, SHOWING STATUES OF THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, EDWARD II., THE REPUTED FOUNDER OF THE COLLEGE, AND CHARLES I., IN WHOSE REIGN THE HALL WAS BUILT

WILDMAN

sided with those who regarded the reformer as a heretic, and submitted to the authority of the Church because without that authority it was impossible to root out the evils to which his teachings, profaned and misinterpreted, had given rise.

In spiritual, as in temporal matters, the new doctrines had been debased. If the teaching of many priests of the old school was ignorant, their ignorance was restrained by authority. The teaching of the mass of Lollards, self-appointed to the responsibilities of preaching, was equally ignorant, but their ignorance was under no such restrictions. Like all religious revivals, pure Lollardism was the unhappy and unwilling parent of many crude, wild, and bigoted theories. Many men in sympathy with the new school of thought in its purest aspect were repelled by the extravagance of the more ignorant of its adherents. It was probably more from motives of sincere repugnance to the seamy side of Lollardism than from sordid hope of advancement that Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, who as a young man had been an ardent disciple of Wycliffe, founded Lincoln, to be a "little college of theologians" who were "to defend the mysteries of the sacred page against these ignorant laics, who profaned with swinish snouts its most holy pearls," and ordained that any of its Fellows who showed signs of being tainted with the new heresy were to be "cast out, like a diseased sheep from the fold of the college."

Whether the University decayed because the Church throughout England was decaying, or whether the Church became lifeless because Oxford had suppressed the best element of Lollardism, freedom of thought, and returned to the barren mazes of scholastic philosophy and the useless subtleties of Duns Scotus and his school, is a question for historians to decide. We can only judge by isolated and disconnected facts. The number of students at Oxford rapidly declined till there was scarcely a fifth of the number that had been there during the age of the schoolmen. This may be regarded as poetic justice, and no doubt many men left the University because they found its teaching stale and, in an intellectual sense, unprofitable. Other causes, however, contributed to its decline. The scourge of the Black Death fell again and again on Oxford, and took a dreadful toll of the lives of men who, living in a town that was surrounded by swamps and herding together at night in dirty and overcrowded dormitories, were peculiarly subject to any epidemic disease that passed through the country. Some of the colleges used to arrange for their members to live while the plague raged on farms that belonged to them, a precaution which must have saved many lives, but hindered steady work. Of non-collegiate members of the University, who in those days far out-numbered those attached to the colleges, many died and many left Oxford never to return. The disastrous war with France and the

Wars of the Roses that succeeded it drew many men from the schools to the field. Moreover, the University's revenues declined, for plague and war combined to lower the value of land from which the bulk of its income and that of the colleges was drawn.

This decline of prosperity had, however, its good results. The great decrease in the number of Oxford students during a period when four new colleges were founded enabled the University authorities to obtain control over those that remained such as it had never had before.

The most lawless element of the University was composed of "chamber-dekyns," who living in private quarters were subject to little or no discipline. Henry V enacted that all Oxford students who refused to live in a college or hall and be subject to the authority of its Head, should be expelled, that Principals of halls, besides being mere boarding-house keepers, should either be graduates of the University or in some other way qualified to have control over its junior members, and that such Heads of halls should be licensed by the Chancellor. According to tradition Henry, while Prince of Wales, had been a member of Queen's. If so, he probably had lodgings in the town, and his weakness for pot-house society doubtless enabled him to become such an authority on the lawless side of Oxford life, that when he amended his ways on ascending the throne he understood the causes of the lack of discipline that kept the University in a state of turmoil.

Irish students, who especially seem to have been thorns in the sides of the Proctors, were expelled unless they could produce certificates showing that they were subject to the King of England. It was, perhaps, in compassion for these poor alien scholars that the statutes of All Souls enacted that one at least of its Fellows must always be an Irishman.

Though even after Henry's edict Oxford did not immediately become a model city, it became less of an Alsatia. Though its streets were not as quiet as a cathedral close, they were less like Ratcliff Highway on Saturday nights before the time of the Metropolitan Police. Hen-roosts were still robbed and townsmen still assaulted, but those students who most frequently indulged in these recreations were detected by the authorities and expelled. As the town was now less at the mercy of lawless gownsmen, there was less occasion for town-and-gown riots, and these diminished both in frequency and violence.

Having got its own members more or less under control, the University turned its attention to the town over which it had been granted great and peculiar power. Inquisitorial courts, consisting each of a Doctor of Theology and two Masters of Arts, sat in the different churches and took evidence on oath as to the conduct of the members of the various parishes. Notorious evil livers, common scolds, even those who kept late hours—all, in fact,

who might set a bad example to students or tempt them from the path of virtue, were sought out and punished. It is interesting to remember that the University still has peculiar powers over the townsfolk of Oxford. No play may be performed in the theatre without the permission of the University authorities. Heads of colleges still have power to enter the dwellings of the townsfolk in order to discover whether any undergraduates are unlawfully hiding within. If the owner of the house does not open his door without delay or dispute he is liable to be fined twenty shillings. The University, in fact, has power to take whatever steps are considered necessary for the preservation of public morality, but, like the Seigneur of Sark, who enjoys the power of life and death but dare not exercise it for fear he should lose it, the Proctors seldom push their arbitrary powers to such a point as would meet with serious resistance.

Another compensatory result of the general decay of the University was to make men such as William of Wykeham, Chichele, and Waynfleete work strenuously to preserve its influence and dignity. William of Wykeham was a churchman of the type that Wycliffe most vehemently attacked. The son of a freed villein, he became a notary, the Clerk of the King's Works at Windsor, and ultimately Chancellor of the Realm. Better able, according to Wycliffe, to build "a castle than to read his psalter," he was a cleric only so far as every member of

the learned profession in his day was a cleric, and the many ecclesiastical appointments which he held were given him as rewards for his secular work rather than because he had any particular fitness for a priest's duties. If he saw nothing wrong in holding more priestly offices than he could ever properly discharge, it was because he was a staunch conservative who saw nothing wrong in a well-established custom. Boys of twelve years old were sometimes appointed to livings. George Nevile, half a century later, was made Archbishop of York before he had even entered Holy Orders. Though more a statesman than a priest, and more a man of the world than a scholar, William of Wykeham was devotedly attached to the Church, and did more for scholarship at Oxford and elsewhere than any man of his age. He was a Church reformer, but he attacked only those abuses that were obvious and acknowledged by all. He strove to uphold the pomp, the dignity, the mystery, the wealth, and especially the authority, both temporal and spiritual, of the Mediæval Church. The mere fact that Wycliffe's ideal of placing the Bible in all men's hands would weaken what may be called the Church's monopoly in spiritual matters, was enough to make him a staunch opponent of Lollardism. With the object of strengthening the hands of the Church he founded New College[1] for the training of

[1] It has been suggested that New College was so called because it marked a new era in the foundation of colleges. It is more probable that the name was at first

NEW COLLEGE FROM THE GARDEN

men who should uphold its dignity. So successful was he in this object that members of his foundation, Chichele and Waynfleete, founded the colleges of All Souls and Magdalen for purposes similar to that of their mother college. Archbishop Chichele founded two colleges at Oxford, the College of St. Bernard for Cistercian monks, which afterwards became the existing college of St. John's, and All Souls, which was to be a chantry as well as a college. It is noteworthy that he obtained for the latter a Bull from the Pope which among other advantages secured for it immunity from any Interdict which might be laid on other Oxford colleges. So much did this college appeal to the imagination of the devout, that it became a place to which many thousands of pilgrims resorted. From the college accounts it appears that for one anniversary service no less than nine thousand wafers were procured. There is a legend that All Souls was founded in expiation for the sin of its founder in urging the King to revive the war with France. Whether this is the case or not, the foundation of the college was an act of piety designed to benefit the souls of "the Founder, the Illustrious Prince Henry, late King of England, the Duke of Clarence, and the *souls of all* the Dukes, Earls, Barons, Knights and others who fell in the wars for the

only applied colloquially. Wykeham dedicated his college to St. Mary, but as Oriel was at first known as the College of St. Mary, his foundation became popularly known as the New College of St. Mary, which term was soon abbreviated into New College.

Crown of France." To relieve the poverty then prevailing among Oxford students Chichele also endowed a "chest" for "poor scholars seeking the priceless pearl of knowledge in the field of Divine learning," borrowers from which were to say five Paternosters and five Ave Marias for the souls of the founder and all the Faithful Departed. The college was to be a home for scholars rather than for teachers and their pupils, and to this day it contains only four undergraduates who are there by virtue of their office as "bible-clerks."

Magdalen College was founded by William of Waynfleete, another member of New College, the headmaster of Winchester, afterwards of Eton. So magnificent was it that Anthony Wood, two centuries later, regarded it as "the most noble and rich structure in the learned world." Its members were discouraged from attending lectures or sermons outside the college lest they should acquire some taint of Lollardism, but members of other colleges were encouraged to attend lectures at Magdalen. During the fifteenth century, despite its decline, the University became for the first time possessed of a public building. Hitherto, the only building it owned (it must be remembered that colleges are not the property of the University) was one of the chapels of St. Mary's Church, and it borrowed the rest of the church when occasion required. Throughout the greater part of the fifteenth century money was collected for the erection of the Divinity

Schools, in part of which was stored the library (which grew into the present Bodleian Library) presented to the University by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who had been a member of Balliol. It is significant of the weakness of the University at the time that it could not prevent the King from delaying the erection of the schools by "commandeering" from time to time, for the enlargement of Windsor Castle, the masons who were at work on it. Duke Humphrey's library consisted of one hundred and twenty-nine volumes, and included some of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Livy, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Dante, and, most valuable of all, a Greek Dictionary. As most of these books were derived from the spoils of the Louvre, it may be said that, except the glorious memory of Agincourt, the nucleus of the Bodleian Library was the only profitable thing that England obtained from her long, costly, and disastrous war with France. Its establishment at Oxford was the first tiny wavelet of the tide of New Learning which a century later was to pour into England.

The foundation of New College, Lincoln, All Souls, and Magdalen, the building of the Divinity Schools, and the establishment of Duke Humphrey's Library might seem to be sufficient to characterise the period which followed the suppression of Lollardism as one of vigorous growth, yet throughout the fifteenth century the influence and reputation of the University steadily waned.

Colleges sold Fellowships, and the University conferred degrees, irrespective of academical or other merit, on anyone who might help it. George Nevile, who had had a brief career at Balliol, was made Chancellor of the University for no other reason than that, being the brother of Warwick the King-maker, he might be able to advance its fortunes. It was the custom of the period for a man on taking his degree to be required to do something for the University, his college, or his tutor; to repair a building or pay the cost of a new stained window, deliver a course of lectures, or give his tutor a new gown. The giving of a banquet was most usually demanded of a man on whom a degree was conferred, and a statute of this period limits the amount that a man might spend for this purpose. The dinner given by Nevile was, it is to be supposed, not bound by any such restriction. Six hundred persons took part in it, and an idea of its magnificence may be obtained from the fact that one course alone consisted, among other things, of cranes, peacocks, curlews, partridges, venison, and fruit. It may be said that the University on this occasion sold a degree for a gigantic mess of pottage.

Out of evil comes good. The University became a mere preparatory school for the continental universities, especially those in Italy, towards which at this time all men who loved learning set their faces. Italy had become the mother of art and scholarship. The Pope kept a staff

of men employed on the task of deciphering and copying the ancient manuscripts that had been recently discovered. Italian noblemen mortgaged estates to buy copies of Herodotus and Plutarch. Charles Reade, a nineteenth-century Fellow of Magdalen, in his great historical novel *The Cloister and the Hearth*, has depicted the enthusiasm that led poor scholars to abandon home and kindred and beg their way to Rome. English students of the fifteenth century, not content with such meagre scholarship as they could acquire at Oxford, stayed there only long enough to pick up the rudiments of learning, and then went to continue their studies at one of the Italian universities. One of these was Grocyn, a member of Magdalen, who, true scholar that he was, not content with acquiring the New Learning for himself, returned to England, obtained a Fellowship at New College, and in a room hired from the Fellows of Exeter was the first Englishman to teach Greek in England. From that time the reputation of the University revived so rapidly that Erasmus, the great Dutch scholar, came to Oxford, because at no other University north of the Alps could he find such opportunities of sharing in the New Learning.

While the dawn of the Renaissance was brightening in England, another force was at work which was to give a tremendous impetus to scholarship and at the same time to strike a blow at the influence of all Universities. Caxton had set up a crude printing press at Westminster, and

was devoting a strenuous old age to the multiplication of copies of the Psalter, the *Topics of Boetius*, a translation of the *Æneid* of "that great clerk" Virgil, the *Golden Legend*, and also many a mediæval romance now known only to the most patient and laborious bookworm. Established with so much vigour, the art of printing grew so rapidly that before Caxton had been in his grave a hundred years the meanest scholar could have a better library than had any of the great schoolmen. The new art—a priceless boon to scholarship in general—hit all Universities hard, for it undermined their unique position. When manuscripts were costly, rare, and to be read only in a few libraries, the owners of these libraries, in most cases colleges and universities, had a monopoly of scholarship, and all who wished to learn must needs go and live near them. When printed books took the place of manuscripts, any man could learn nearly as much as a University could teach him without leaving his own home. From the time of the introduction of printing, though the University towns continued to be places where scholars might derive great advantage from mutual intercourse, they lost the peculiar advantage of being the only homes of learning. That the Universities have not the great political and academical power that they enjoyed in the fourteenth century is due to the fact that scholarship is now distributed more or less evenly throughout Great Britain instead of being concentrated as it was then at Oxford and Cambridge.

IX

CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

"I know not whether you have any similar strange customs in Cambridge, so that, perhaps, such ceremonies as the All Souls' Mallard, the Queen's boar's head, etc., will strike you as more absurd than they do an Oxford man; but I own I am of opinion that these remnants of Gothicism tend very much to keep us in a sound consistent track; and that one cause of the declension of the foreign universities, was their compliance, in such points as these, with the variation of manners."—*From a letter written from Brasenose by Reginald Heber, Jan. 15, 1801.*

IN a University that has its roots deeply embedded in the past, it is natural to find relics of old customs and traditions, established by the wisdom of men long dead and adapted to an age that has long since passed away. Of the statutes and customs originated by the University's early founders and benefactors, some few are still in force, some are honoured on exceptional occasions, some are forgotten by all but antiquarians and bookworms, and it is curious to note—a sermon might be preached on the subject—that of the old statutes, those that most enjoined austerity and rigid discipline have disappeared,

whereas of the ancient customs, those which gave excuse for conviviality have best withstood the destructive power of Time.

In the statutes of many of the older colleges, for instance, recreation of every sort is sternly discouraged. Even chess, possibly the most sober occupation that can be called a game, was included among "noxious, inordinate, and unhonest" amusements, and games such as tennis were regarded with absolute horror. Such restrictions have absolutely disappeared, but convivial customs have had a longer life. Queen's men are still called to dinner by the merry note of a trumpet, and loving-cups full of good liquor still on state occasions pass from hand to hand across many a college dinner-table. The bonfires sometimes lit in college quadrangles to celebrate a college victory are relics perhaps of the more authorised bonfires in which in bygone days men of one school of thought triumphantly burnt the writings of men of another with whose opinions they disagreed, and the jovial habits of the Georgian age are kept in memory by a huge silver punch-bowl belonging to Jesus College. It was presented to the college in 1732 by Sir Watkin Williams Wynn on condition that whoever could span it with his arms should have it filled with punch, and that if he could follow this feat by drinking its contents unaided he was to be allowed to keep it. The bowl measures sixty-two inches in circumference, and as it will hold

ten gallons, Jesus College, having retained it all through the time of "six-bottle" men, is now in little danger of losing it.

The founder of Merton did not wish those who enjoyed his bounty to be debauched by the pleasures of the table. They were to be content with bread, small-beer (double-beer was specifically prohibited), and one course daily of meat or fish. No one was to talk at meals, but all were to listen to one who read aloud from the *Moralia* of Gregory or some other edifying work, "lest the unbridled license of a garrulous tongue give evidence of an ill-ordered mind." Perhaps it was found that the silent but emphatic gestures of a thirsty soul who wished his neighbour to pass the beer-jug were unseemly, for it was ordained later that a man might speak if absolutely necessary, provided that he spoke (in Latin, of course) gently and in a low tone. "Did not Martha call Mary sweetly?" said Archbishop Peckham when he made the concession. At the end of the sixteenth century an attempt to abolish the custom was sternly checked by the Merton Visitor, who enjoined that at least one chapter of the New Testament was to be read before dinner. Even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century a portion of the New Testament was read before dinner, and the Fellows were supposed to find in it some theme with which to occupy their tongues during the meal.

The original Merton statutes enjoined that a man who

indulged himself by dining out was to be fined. One wonders what the servitors got to eat. They were called Portionistae (now corrupted into Postmasters) because they had "a stinted portion" in comparison with the Fellows! The latter apparently sometimes took pity on the Portionistae and smuggled food out of hall to give them, for this act of charity was specifically forbidden, under penalty of a penny fine for each offence.

Robert Eglesfield, the founder of Queen's (established eighty years after the founding of Merton), was more tolerant to man's weaknesses. The food allowance he provided for was half as much again as that supplied at any of the older colleges, and he expressly ordained that the broth should be well cooked and made of good materials. The Fellows were allowed to talk at meals in French, after the Court fashion, instead of in Latin. The only onerous regulation made was that the "poor scholars" were to be questioned or "opposed" in grammar by the Fellows before sitting down to dinner. The religious character of the foundation is shown in a quaint ordinance. The original society was to consist of a Provost and twelve Fellows, who were to sit in hall on three sides of a table in imitation of the conventional representation of Christ and his twelve Apostles at the Last Supper. They were to wear blood-red or purple robes in memory of Christ's Death and Passion. When funds permitted the number of poor

QUEEN'S FRONT QUADRANGLE AND HALL, DESIGNED BY HAWKSWOOD, A PUPIL OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

WILDMAN

scholars on the foundation was to be seventy, in memory of the traditional number of His disciples. Thirteen poor men and women were to be fed at a side-table in the hall, and broth was to be distributed daily at the college gate.

On ceremonial occasions provision was made for feasting. The founder presented the college with an auroch's horn mounted in silver-gilt, which is still used on state occasions as a loving-cup. Very early in the history of Queen's the custom was instituted of having a boar's head as part of the Christmas dinner, and to this day it is carried in state into hall on Christmas evening, to the sound of a carol which begins—

> "The boar's head in hand bear I,
> Bedecked with bays and rosemary."

The legend of the origin of this custom is that it celebrates an adventure which once befell a Queen's man. Walking and reading Aristotle in Shotover Forest he was charged by a wild boar, which he killed by stuffing his book down its throat. The originator of this legend can hardly have had personal experience of the vigour and singleness of purpose with which a wild boar charges. It is more probable that the custom was adopted by Queen's when Christmas was more of a feast than it now is. It was a pagan custom at Yuletide to sacrifice a boar to

Freya, the Scandinavian goddess of love, mirth, and peace. When England became Christian there was no reason why the boar should not still be eaten in the interests of mirth and jollity, and probably the original Fellows of Queen's, having no turkeys to grace the Christmas table, chose to feast on boar's head. Mediæval fondness for ponderous jokes, traces of which remain in many an old rebus and miserere, survives in a custom still observed at Queen's on January 1st, at the annual college "gaudy" or feast day. The Bursar presents each person present with a needle and thread (the colour of the recipient's hood) saying, "Take this and be thrifty." The intention of this gift is not so much to encourage economical habits as to keep alive the memory of the founder; *aiguille et fil* (needle and thread) bearing a remote resemblance to the sound of the founder's name, Eglesfield.

All Souls had a curious custom that lasted into the nineteenth century, by which the Fellows "meliorated their great sobriety." Before daybreak on the morning of All Souls, all who felt inclined to do so met, armed with sticks, and having chosen a "Lord of the Mallard" carried him three times round the quadrangle, one man at their head carrying a live drake fastened to the top of a pole, all singing a song of which the following verses form part:—

"Griffin, Turkey, Bustard, Capon,
Let other hungry mortalls gape on,

And on their bones with stomachs fall hard,
But let All Souls men have the mallard.

Chorus: Hough the bloud of King Edward, by the bloud of King Edward
It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

Stories strange were told I trow
By Baker, Holinshead, and Stow,
Of Cocks and Bulls and other quere things
That were done in the Reigns of their Kings.
Chorus.

The poets fained Jove turned a swan,
But let them prove it if they can;
As for our profe 'tis not at all hard
That 'twas a swapping, swapping mallard.
Chorus.

Then let us sing and dance a galliard
To the remembrance of the mallard,
And as the mallard does in Poole,
Let's dabble, dive, and duck in Bowle.
Chorus."

This done the merry-makers knocked at the doors of all who had not attended the ceremony, demanding a forfeit of a crown from each. Then carrying torches they climbed on to the roof of the college and sang the song

over again. Returning to the common room they drank and amused themselves till daybreak. Then the drake's head was chopped off, and its blood, mingled with wine, was drunk before dispersing.

The origin of this curious and not very stately custom is not known. It might be suggested that it originated in the bad old days after a number of All Souls men had successfully raided a farmyard (such lawless raids on property were fairly frequent as late as the end of the seventeenth century); but the tradition is that it arose from the fact of a drake having been started out of a drainpipe by the workmen engaged in laying the foundations, whereupon all present postponed their other engagements and gave chase. Anthony Wood considered that in perambulating the college with sticks the Fellows were supposed to be still hunting for the mallard, that presumably had escaped on the occasion when the swapping bird flashed across the page of All Souls' history. The reference in the second verse to the antiquarians, Baker and Stow, shows that the song could not have been written much before 1700, but the custom may, of course, be much older. It is first mentioned in 1632, when the All Souls Visitor complained that men had torn down doors and gates in their mock search for the mallard.

The song is not a masterpiece. One can imagine it being trolled out with some spirit at a college gaudy when the wine was beginning to warm men's blood, but

sung on the roof of All Souls in the small hours of a bleak November morning——! It is easier to account for the custom falling into disuse than to propound theories as to its origin. The song, however, is still sung at All Souls "gaudies." A medallion effigy of the bird was placed above the college buttery in 1789, and a glass goblet, found with some articles of seventeenth-century pottery when the foundations of a new building were dug in 1896, has the mallard engraved on it. Dr. Tindal, a Fellow of All Souls, who lapsed from the path of orthodoxy, was said by one of his colleagues to have shown "the first marks of infidelity in speaking disrespectfully of the mallard."

A prettier early morning custom, which has inspired a picture by Holman Hunt, survives at Magdalen. Every May-Day morning the chapel choir climb to the top of the tower and salute the sunrise with a hymn. There are several theories as to the origin of this custom. The most popular one is that it takes the place of a requiem mass sung at that hour and place for the repose of the soul of Henry VIII. But why, if this is the case, is not the hymn sung on the date of his birth or death? A second theory regards the custom as a commemoration of an inauguration ceremony. Another supposes it to be a relic of one of those pagan ceremonies in honour of spring that the Mediæval Church, lacking the power to abolish, consecrated to Christian use. The hymn now

sung gives no clue to the origin of the practice, for it was written in comparatively recent years. It is known that in the eighteenth century the songs sung were secular. Anthony Wood, whose acquaintance with Oxford dated from the time of the Civil War until long after the restoration of Charles II, described the ceremony as a salute to Flora, the Goddess of Spring—(how did it survive the austere days of the Commonwealth?)—though this is no proof that the ceremony was not a religious one in earlier days.

During the sixteenth and earlier part of the seventeenth century townsmen, who called themselves *satrapae*, used to invade the halls of Merton and Magdalen on New Year's Day and sing choruses. Discouraged at first, it became customary to dismiss these waits with a present of 6s. 8d., but it was always stipulated that the money was given out of good-will and without any sense of obligation. Merton men until the middle of the sixteenth century used to elect a sort of King of Misrule on the vigil of St. Edmund's Day, who under the title of King of the Kingdom of Beans could sentence members of the college to sit in stocks that were placed at the end of the hall, and to undergo other humiliations. Old scores were probably paid off on unpopular men, and especially on the servants, who, like lay brothers at a monastery, were regarded as members of the college.

A formal feast held annually at Merton until 1685 had

MAGDALEN TOWER FROM BOTANIC GARDEN

a curious origin. If tradition is to be trusted, a prolonged disputation took place between the famous Duns Scotus and the equally famous William of Ockham, in which the former schoolman became weary and lost his temper. "Domine, quid faciemus?" asked the younger at last, not knowing whether his opponent wished to abandon or to continue the debate. "Ite et facite quid vultis," replied Duns Scotus peevishly. The permission to go and do as they pleased was taken literally by the younger students, who promptly broke into the buttery and regaled themselves on ale and what food they could find. It became customary to do this whenever a dean prolonged a disputation beyond midnight.

Most colleges have an annual feast known as "gaudy." In olden times the chief feature of these was the permission given to speak English during dinner. Now they are chiefly remarkable for the preservation of old customs, such as the passing round of a "grace-cup" or "loving-cup," with which in earlier days every dinner used to terminate, and the courtly ceremony of drinking wine with guests. "Gaudy" is one of those words which have died out of common use, but are preserved here and there by some school or society that clings to ancient custom. (It is derived obviously from the Latin *gaudere*, to rejoice.) Shakespeare makes Mark Antony say to Cleopatra, "Come, let's have one other gaudy night!"

Of other words Oxford may claim to be the parent. "Chum" and perhaps "diggings" (*i.e.* lodgings) are derived from *camera degentes* (dwellers in a private apartment). The Latin words were corrupted into "chamberdekyns" and afterwards into "chums." A "dun," by the way, is a creditor who makes a "din" on his debtor's door. Don is a title of respect corrupted from the Latin *Dominus*. Oxford examiners used to "oppose" men in argument; now they "pose" them by putting classical or historical questions.

The admission of the public to *viva voce* examinations is a relic of the time when the University was practically nothing more than a guild of schoolmasters, a number of whom used to meet to decide whether an applicant for a license or degree was qualified to teach. For the same reason the presence of at least nine Masters of Arts is necessary when degrees are conferred, and in case anyone wishes to oppose the granting of the degree to a candidate the Proctors walk down the room and back again before the actual ceremony takes place, so that any dissentient may register a protest by plucking their gowns. A man who fails to pass an examination is therefore said to be "plucked."

Many of the colleges possess relics of founders, benefactors, and others, in the shape of mitres, crosiers, or vestments, and miscellaneous curiosities. New College possesses what was long supposed to be a unicorn's

horn, but which unromantic modern naturalists have identified as a narwhal's tusk. It was believed to be an antidote to poison. The Earl of Leicester asked the college to give it him. It refused, but sawed off and sent him a small piece of it. Lincoln has a scourge of four tails, which is formally handed to each sub-rector when he assumes office, though it is not now used on undergraduates. Over the gateway of the second quadrangle at Lincoln is an image of an imp. Tradition has it that one of the minor order of devils annoyed the masons who were building the college. A priest was sent for who promptly turned it into stone. Queen's has, or had in Anthony Wood's time, a specimen of the devil's own handwriting. A former member of Queen's, who was no better than he should be, used cabalistic means to command the devil to answer a question. An unseen hand at once lifted a pen and wrote something on a sheet of paper, choosing the old Iberic character, which has a profusion of prongs and tridents. The wizard became too frightened to decipher the writing, and no one has since attempted to do so.

It used to be customary at Lincoln to entertain all the parishioners of All Saints' and St. Michael's who came to the college on Ascension Day to beat the bounds of the parish. They were given ale in which ground ivy had been steeped, which it is supposed was intended to symbolise "wine mingled with gall."

Every Shrove Tuesday the butler of Brasenose used to

present the Principal of the college with a set of verses written in praise of Brasenose ale. These were written by undergraduates, and such as have been preserved are valuable rather for their references to passing events than for their literary merit. One of them speaks of Bishop Heber, who was a member of Brasenose, as

. . . . "the Bishop of Calcutta,
Whose name without reverence I dare not utter."

Of all Oxford curiosities perhaps the best known is the brasen nose which gives its name to Brasenose College. This curious article in very early days served as a door-knocker for Brasenose Hall. When a number of the members of this hall migrated to Stamford in the early part of the fourteenth century they took the knocker with them. Those who remained, it appears, wishing to continue to justify the name of their hall, had another nose made to stand over their gateway. It was made of iron instead of brass, and was quite different in shape from that which had been taken to Stamford. In 1890 the original nose was brought back from Stamford and placed in the college library. The other still stands over the Brasenose gateway. Many speculations have been made as to its origin and meaning. A century or so ago many supposed it to be the head (for the image has a minimum of face to a maximum of nose) which was inhabited by Roger Bacon's familiar spirit. A French traveller of the

eighteenth century was told that it preserved the features of Duns Scotus. (Did his guide believe this, or was he "pulling the Frenchman's leg"?) Mr. Verdant Green was told that it was modelled from a cast of the principal feature of the first Head of the College. Many still believe it to be a rebus for the name of the College which they say is corrupted from *brasinium* or brewhouse. This harmonised with the now exploded legend that King Alfred had a brewhouse where Brasenose now stands and a palace on the present site of Oriel. The more generally accepted theory is that the original Brasenose Hall had no name. That it had the original brasenose at its door as a knocker or door-handle (such grotesques were common in mediæval days), and that from this cause it became first popularly and then officially known as Brasenose Hall. If this is the case the nose is older than the name of the hall, instead of being a rebus of it.

X

THE COMING OF THE NEW LEARNING

THE statutes of the first college to be founded after Grocyn had begun to teach in Oxford the New Learning he had acquired in Italy, indicate a desire on the part of the founders to cling conservatively to the old form of learning and the established order of things. Even in the outward aspect of its buildings as they stand to-day, Brasenose, founded in 1509, is typical more of the mediæval colleges than of those that were founded during and after the Renaissance period. The austerity of its old quadrangle, surrounded by grim black buildings unadorned by shrub or creeper, is relieved only by a square of monotonous green turf. It has no wealth of floral colour or charm of graceful outline such as beautifies the more modern colleges of Wadham, Worcester, or St. John's. Its gateway is surmounted by one of the grotesque emblems that in the Middle Ages served the purpose of signboards or modern brass letter plates. The very history of the buildings recalls the history of the University in the days when colleges were not. Brasenose College was an amalgamation of nine

An Oriel Window in St. John's College

X

THE COMING OF THE NEW LEARNING

separate halls, the property, some of private members of the University, some of University College and Oriel, some of the monks of Oseney and Eynsham. These in earlier days had taken the place of still smaller halls, the property of private speculators, who had the license of the Chancellor to board and lodge students, and in the earliest days of all the site on which Brasenose now stands was occupied by the houses of townspeople hired by small communities of gownsmen who clubbed together to share expenses and mutually assist each other.

In one direction only did Brasenose adapt itself to the change that was coming over the University. It admitted gentleman commoners, as well as "poor students" as Magdalen had done half a century earlier, an indication of the fact that Oxford was gradually becoming a school for the sons of men of rank and wealth. In all other respects it was rigidly conservative. In scholarship its members were to confine themselves to the time-honoured subjects of Sophistry, Logic, and Philosophy. In religious exercises the old customs were to be adhered to. The Fellows were to enter Holy Orders within seven years of taking their Master of Arts degree. All members of the college were to wear surplices in chapel under penalty of a fine. Every Fellow was bound to recite the Lord's Prayer five times every day in memory of the five wounds of Christ. The Angelic Salutation was to be repeated in honour of the five joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and

prayers were to be said daily for the welfare of the souls of the founders, William Smyth and Richard Sutton. The desire of the founders to perpetuate the ancient faith (the college was founded four years after the publication of Luther's *Theses*) is sufficiently expressed in the statute which declares the college to exist "for the support and exaltation of the Christian Faith, for the advancement of Holy Church, and for the furtherance of Divine Worship." In one respect only did the founders venture to improve on the example of those who had established colleges before them. They ordained that students might be birched for playing, laughing, or talking in lecture, neglecting work or making "odious comparisons" between Northerners and Southerners, noblemen and commoners, Masters of Arts and Masters of Theology, or between any two classes of men between whom latent feud was ever ready to burst out into riot.

The first conspicuous appearance of Brasenose men was in the Vice-Chancellor's court, when a number of them, headed by their Principal, were bound over to keep the peace towards the masons engaged in building the new college of Corpus Christi, whom they had been assaulting. The cause of the quarrel is not recorded, but it may be assigned to the fact that the new buildings were to house men who were to devote themselves especially to the New Learning which Brasenose despised.

Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, who founded

Corpus in 1516, was, with the exception of Cardinal Wolsey, the last of the great ecclesiastical statesmen, and one of the last of the great clerical pluralists. More statesman than priest, he had helped to put Henry VII on the throne. As Lord Privy Seal he had negotiated treaties between England and Scotland, and later, as Bishop of Durham, he had taken arms to resist the invasion of James IV of Scotland. On behalf of the King he had wrung money out of the clergy, telling those who came before him richly clad that they could obviously afford to be generous, and those who appeared in homely garments that they must have hoarded money which the King could put to better use. With Archbishop Warham he had endeavoured to persuade Pope Julius II to canonise Henry VI, but they were disinclined to pay the fee demanded, and the Pope refused their plea on the ground that it was necessary to distinguish between "innocents and saints."

Towards the end of his life Foxe, desiring to leave some memorial behind him, intended, in collaboration with Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, to found a monastic college at Oxford. He was dissuaded, however, by Oldham, who, foreseeing the ruin that must sooner or later fall on the monasteries, protested, "Shall we build houses and provide livelihoods for a company of bussing monks, whose end and fall we ourselves may live to see? No, no! it is more meet a great deal that we should have care

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to provide for the increase of learning, and for such as who, by their learning, shall do good in the church and the commonwealth." The new foundation was in consequence a secular college where "scholars, like clever bees, night and day may make wax and sweet honey to the honour of God and the advantage of all Christian men."

The New Learning by this time was advancing rapidly at Oxford. In 1491 Grocyn, its pioneer, began to teach Greek in a room hired from Exeter College, and Linacre, a Fellow of All Souls, who had studied in Italy, gave the first lectures on medicine that Oxford men had heard. Five years later Colet came back from Florence to Oxford and delivered lectures that attracted men of the highest rank in the Church and the University, to which all men who chose were admitted without fee. His subject was one of which Oxford hitherto had known little—St. Paul's epistles. In 1498 Erasmus quitted the monastery in which he had been placed as a boy and came to Oxford to learn Greek under Grocyn. With such ardour did he devote himself to scholarship, that he went ragged rather than spend on clothes money that might be used to purchase books.

Andrew Lang has well said that the Renaissance awoke in Florence the love of beauty, at Oxford the desire for truth. We can best understand this by considering the effect that it had on the minds of some of the most

Corpus Christi College

prominent adherents of the New Learning. It inspired Sir Thomas More, a member of Canterbury College (that soon afterwards shared the fate of other monastic foundations), to write his *Utopia*, a humorous sociological work, in which he made a radical examination of all existing institutions from the rights of the labouring classes to the bases of regal authority, from town-planning to the treatment of criminals. It is curious to note that Wycliffe, who became the mouthpiece of Oxford at the time of its greatest intellectual vigour, and More, one of the first Oxford men to be influenced by the Renaissance, should both have advocated a form of socialism. In Colet the New Learning produced a passionate desire to return to the faith of the early Christian Fathers, stripped of all symbolism, dogma, and elaborate ceremonial. Greek was in his eyes only a key that could unlock the half-forgotten teachings of the apostles. His repugnance towards everything that distinguished the mediæval from the primitive Church is shown by his scornful refusal to kiss a shoe reputed to have been worn by Thomas à Becket, and his pertinent question whether the saint would not prefer that the vast amount of money that had been spent on the decoration of his shrine should have been devoted to the needs of the poor.

In these days of cheap Bibles and Sunday-schools it is hard to realise the effect that new-found ability to read the Scriptures in the original had on educated and cultured

men who hitherto had only known such parts of it as were contained in their missals and their breviaries. Erasmus supported Colet in his appeal for simplicity. "Did Christ," he asked, "teach subtleties that can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians? Is the strength of the Christian religion to consist in man's ignorance of it?" Though the Church since the days of Wycliffe had ordained that whoever translated the Bible should be burnt as a heretic, Archbishop Warham (formerly of New College) joined with Foxe, the founder of Corpus, in supporting the intention of Erasmus to translate the New Testament into English.

Love of the New Learning is clearly marked in the statutes of Foxe's College. He established (for the first time in the history of Oxford) a public lecturer in Greek who was to admit all members of the University to his courses. He appointed a learned Spaniard, who had studied in Italy, to teach Latin, with especial injunctions "to extirpate barbarism." He directed that a Professor of Theology should interpret the faith not of mediæval theologians, but of the early Fathers. He freely admitted learned foreigners to Readerships though not to Fellowships, and arranged that Fellows who wished to study in Italy should be enabled to do so.

The early years of the New Learning were not wholly peaceful. The livelier members of the University formed themselves into two factions known as Greeks and

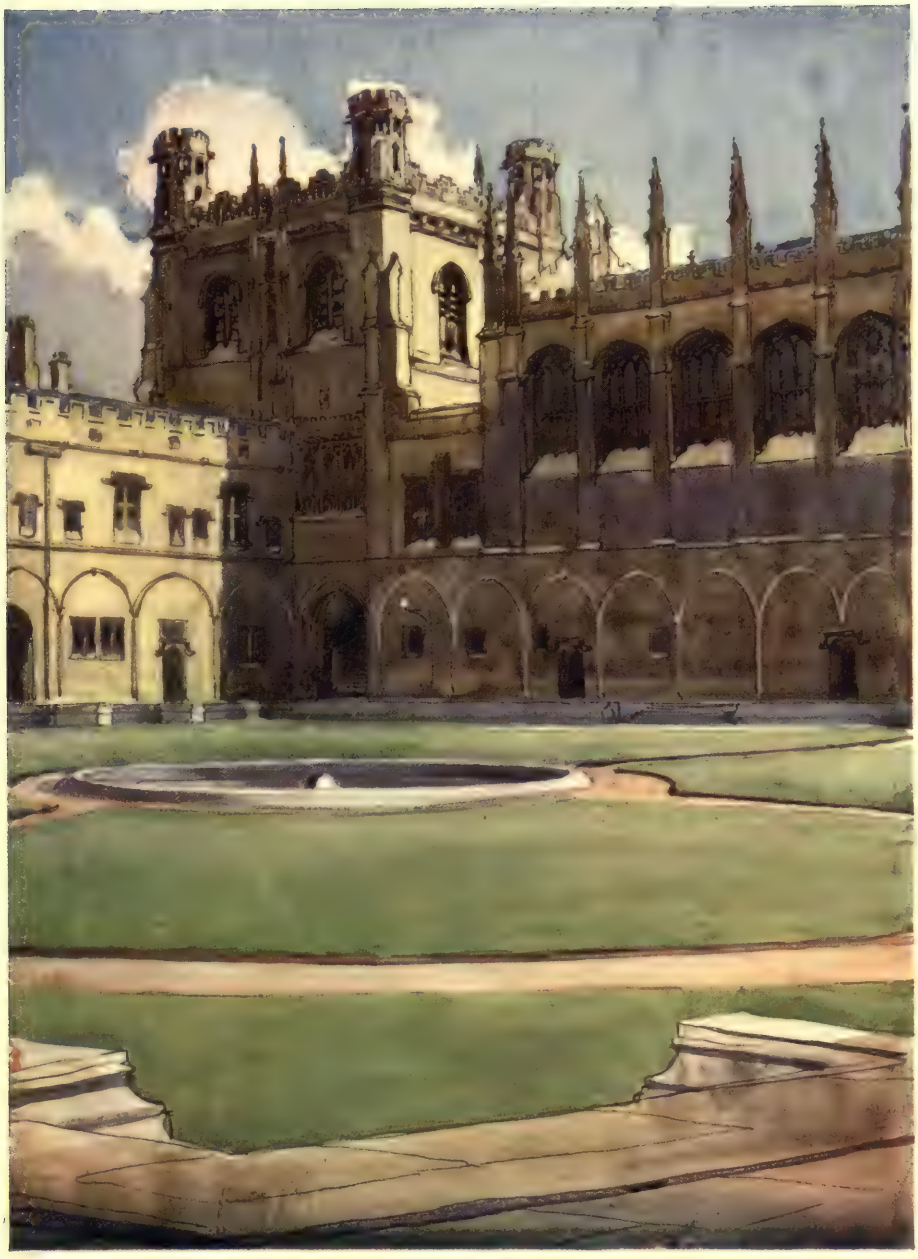
Trojans, and with fist and quarterstaff discussed in the streets the respective merits of the old scholarship and the new. More elderly adherents of either party fulminated against each other from the security of the pulpit. The partial suppression of old dogmas, moreover, instead of bringing about the simplicity desired by Colet, produced a tangled maze of new ones, and to give zest to the general confusion any man whose zeal carried him too far beyond discretion was in danger of losing his life, as did a Fellow of All Souls, who was hanged at Tyburn in 1519 for being an accomplice of the Holy Maid of Kent.

Nine years after the founding of Corpus, Cardinal College was established on a scale consistent with the princely dignity of its founder, Wolsey. Not only did he devote to it the revenues of no less than twenty-two suppressed priories and convents, he even contributed generously out of his own private purse. The great Cardinal had been Fellow and Bursar of Magdalen, whose famous tower is said to have been designed by him. He was charged at one time with embezzling Magdalen's revenue, but history does not confirm the charge. On the face of it, there seems an absurdity in accusing a man who did everything both good and ill on a magnificent scale of descending to petty larceny. He left his mark on Oxford in many ways, by revising the statutes, by strengthening the University's power over the town—an act that gave fresh life to the old town-and-gown feud—and chiefly by founding a college

into which, according to Foxe, "he gathered whatsoever excellent thing there was in the whole realm." In his anxiety to collect all the best men he could find into his college, he chose men, some from Magdalen, some from Cambridge, who were prominent adherents of the New Learning. It so happened that most of these men were tainted with what Wolsey described as the "hellish Lutheran heresy," a circumstance which was to have a profound influence on the stormy days that were to come.

At the beginning of his reign Henry VIII had been graciously pleased to give the New Learning the benefit of his approval. He was no bad scholar, and his vanity had been flattered by the title which the Pope had granted him in recognition of the part he had taken in the controversy with Luther. When the increasing age of Katharine of Aragon and the bright eyes of Anne Boleyn had aroused in him conscientious scruples as to the validity of his marriage, it occurred to him to use the New Learning as a pawn in the game of his own personal intrigue. He appealed to the Universities of Europe, as he had formerly appealed to the Pope, to pronounce his marriage with Katharine void. The French Universities were bribed and bullied into acquiescence. The German Universities, though Protestant, vehemently refused to truckle to his meanness. The English Universities were of course in an awkward predicament, for Henry had a violent temper and a heavy hand. Oxford

"Tom Quad," in Christchurch: Built by Cardinal Wolsey, and renovated during Dr. Liddell's term of office as Dean



pronounced a judgment that might be taken to mean affirmation or denial or nothing at all, and even this, to Oxford's everlasting credit, was only obtained by the illegal exclusion of the greater number of graduates from Convocation.

The next few years saw the King's declaration that he was head of the Church in England, the fall of Wolsey, the confiscation of the college he had founded, the destruction of the monasteries, and the execution of Sir Thomas More, who was too fine a man to grovel to the King's whims. The passing of the government of the English Church from the Pope to the King was of importance to Oxford in that it passed from a pontiff who could punish heresy with interdict and excommunication to one who could enforce his views with the more tangible terrors of the rack and the stake. The fate of the translation of the New Testament fell into the hands of a man who cared more for the gratification of his own lusts than he cared for anything else on earth. The destruction of the monasteries involved the destruction of all the monastic colleges at Oxford, and for a time the fate of the secular colleges trembled in the balance. Fortunately, however, Henry was either too sincerely anxious to promote the New Learning, or too proud of his rôle as its patron, to destroy the colleges. "I tell you, sirs," he said to some of his courtiers, "that I judge no land in England better bestowed than that which is given to

our Universities. I love not learning so ill that I will impair the revenewes of anie one House by a penie, whereby it may be upholden." He endowed five Regius Professorships (Divinity, Hebrew, Greek, Medicine, and Civil Law), and refounded Cardinal College, though on a scale less magnificent than that designed by Wolsey. In 1545 he dissolved it again, and finally reconstituted it under the name of Christ Church, transferring to it the see of Oseney Abbey, by reason of which what was formerly St. Frideswyde's Church now serves the double purpose of cathedral of the Oxford diocese and chapel of Christ Church College. Henry VIII has of course to be mentioned in the Bidding Prayer before the University sermons as founder of Christ Church. Some preachers not unnaturally would prefer to give the honour to Wolsey, and get out of the difficulty created by their clear instructions being at variance with their sense of justice by saying "among whom I am bound in this place to mention King Henry VIII *as* the founder of Christ Church."

Henry's zeal for ecclesiastical reform and the New Learning took a curious form. He ordered the Oxford libraries to be ransacked in order that whatever books were, from his point of view, heretical might be destroyed. In those that were spared the Pope's name, wherever it occurred, was blotted out. All "superstitious utensils" were confiscated, cartloads of books were sold for waste

paper, and the influence of Duns Scotus, which for so long had governed the schools, was finally dispelled by the destruction of every copy of his works. "We have set Dunce in Bocardo" (the University prison), wrote the Commissioner entrusted with the task, "and utterly banished him from Oxford for ever, with all his blind glosses. And the second time we came to New College we found all the great quadrant full of the leaves of Dunce, the wind blowing them into every corner."

Though it had the advantage of Royal favour, the New Learning that had begun with such fair promise became blighted. Freedom of thought, which was the breath of life to the new movement, was denied it. The final arbiter in spiritual, as in all other matters, was a Royal libertine. Those who had the luck to share the King's views bullied and persecuted those who had not. Of the latter some stayed at their posts and died for their opinions, some kept silence, many left the University. As when freedom of thought and speech was suppressed with the suppression of Lollardism, so now, when no man could differ from the King and prosper, the University sank into decay. Throughout the latter part of Henry's reign and those of his two successors its influence and numbers steadily dwindled. Vacant Fellowships had to be filled for lack of other claimants by undergraduates, and washerwomen, unrebuked, dried their linen in the deserted schools.

XI

MORE RELICS OF OLDEN TIMES

THOUGH mediæval students were all regarded as clerks (*clerici*), the secular colleges were in no sense monasteries; but as the members of a college were destined for holy orders and had to live under conditions very similar to those prevailing in monasteries, it was natural that founders of colleges should have framed their statutes more or less in imitation of monastic discipline. It is hardly necessary to say that women—gallantly defined by Richard de Bury as "those biped beasts whose cohabitation with the clergy was forbidden of old, from which we have always taught our nurslings to flee more than from the asp and the cockatrice"—were excluded from the precincts of the older colleges, except curiously enough from the New College guest-table. Perhaps it was considered that ladies of high rank such as were likely to be entertained in the college hall would be too effectively chaperoned to be likely to disturb the celibate tranquillity of the Fellows. Young women of low degree were not allowed within its walls. The college linen had to be washed by a man. If a launderer

could not be found, a laundress might be employed provided that she were of such age and condition that no sinister suspicion could fall on her. Work such as is usually done by chambermaids was performed by poor students, servitors or choristers. When in later years the status of these rose, and it was considered advisable to relieve them of menial duties, their work was in some cases performed by women, but these were required to be "old and hideous (*senis et horrida*)."

Women were regarded with a more tolerant eye when Wadham was founded in the reign of James I, but the foundress, Dorothy Wadham, preserved the mediæval rule of excluding women from her college. A laundress might be employed, but she was on no account to approach nearer than the college gate, where she was to receive the college linen from the hands of the porter. Current scandal reported that the strictness of this regulation was due to the fact that Mistress Wadham, though well advanced in years when she founded the college, regarded its first Warden with more than Platonic affection, and that when she found that he was anxious to marry someone else, spitefully did her best to make this impossible.

It was perhaps partly because any man, even in Tudor times, who walked the streets alone was in danger of a broken head, that the statutes of Corpus Christi forbade any men below the rank of Master of Arts to walk out-

side the college unless accompanied by two other men. When they attended lectures at Magdalen all went and returned in a body. Lest restraint within the college should prove irksome, permission was granted them to play with a ball in the garden. Almost all the members of the older colleges were forbidden to go out of doors alone (these rules were, of course, constantly broken), but, as a rule, they were permitted to walk in pairs. The Corpus rule seems to have been in accordance with the monastic custom of encouraging men to spy on each other. A man walking with two companions would be less likely to say or do anything unseemly than if he walked with only one, for he could rebut a charge made against him by one person far more easily than a charge brought by two. In days when a man's dignity was to some extent gauged by the number of men in his train, it was considered not quite respectable to walk or ride alone. Even so late as the time when Archbishop Laud was Chancellor of the University, it was enacted in the University statutes that a man who walked without a companion was to be fined a penny. Most Oxford statutes have out-lived undergraduate obedience to them. Within the memory of living men, however, it was a point of etiquette in many colleges for no man to leave his college alone. He would linger in the porter's lodge till another man appeared, pass through the door with him and then go his own way. When the Head of a

Wadham College from Trinity College Gardens

college rode out to inspect the college's property he was, until comparatively recent times, accompanied by at least one mounted man (usually a Fellow) and several footmen. For this purpose two or more horses were allowed him. The Warden of New College, which was established on a far more lavish scale than any college which preceded it, was allowed six horses for his train when he visited the New College estates. The present Warden still makes an annual progress, but accompanied by only one Fellow, whose duty it is to distribute gratuities, known as "regards," among farm servants and others on the various estates.

The monastic custom of encouraging men to report each other's lapses from good conduct was adopted by most of the mediæval colleges. At regular intervals all members of a college were summoned to the hall (except at Magdalen, where the inquisition was held in secret and no one was allowed to know who impeached him), when each in turn stood up and accused any of his fellows whom he knew to be guilty of misdemeanour. Charges ranged from accusations of immorality and embezzlement of funds to wearing unclerical garments, keeping ferrets, and misbehaving at table. In 1507 a Fellow of Magdalen was accused of baptising a cat in order that it might reveal hidden treasure. He appears to have made himself unpopular by trying to reform the behaviour of his colleagues, so there may have been more of malice

than of truth in the charge. The custom of formally reporting each other's conduct still survives at most colleges in a modified form, but one which undergraduates find somewhat trying. At the end of every term all members of a college are summoned to the hall, when each undergraduate in turn stands up and looks foolish while his tutor and the Dean make a verbal report on his conduct to the Head of the college, who sums up the evidence and pronounces a judgment that takes the form of commendation or condemnation. The ceremony is naturally unpopular with undergraduates, who would perhaps dislike it less if it preserved more of its original form, so that they might be entertained by hearing the Fellows relate each other's misdemeanours. It would be some consolation to a man who has been gated for irregular habits to hear his tutor or the Dean accused of frequenting the houses of townsmen or wearing "unhonest boots." It was found convenient to make the original ceremony the occasion for the collection of fees that were due from members, and though these are now paid at another time, the ceremony is still called "collections."

The founder of New College was the first to institute the custom, which became general and lasted until a recent date, of compelling its members to attend daily chapel. It has been suggested that the regulation was inspired not so much by care for the spiritual welfare of those on

his foundation as for his own. As it was the recognised duty of every member of a college to pray for the soul of its founder, the rule which compelled him to attend daily chapel tended to ensure that he did so. Each college and the University itself has a special Bidding Prayer, in which men are enjoined to pray for those of its benefactors and well-wishers as are living, and praise God for those who are dead. Before the Reformation the Bidding Prayers enjoined the praying for the souls of founders of the colleges and benefactors of the University. If history be a true guide, one or two of them badly needed it.

New College Fellows are still summoned to formal college meetings by the porter striking the door at the bottom of their stairs with a mallet. Rousing sleepers by this method was a common practice in mediæval monasteries. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century all members of New College were summoned to dinner by choristers, who walked across the quadrangle from the gateway to the kitchen chanting a phrase in which French and Latin were queerly blended, "Tempus est vocandi a manger." They endeavoured to spin out the call so that they should reach the last note and the kitchen simultaneously. The Senior Fellow present at the Lincoln High Table still gives the signal for grace by striking the table with a wooden trencher. Doubtless in days before crockery came into use he used his own platter for the purpose.

Most of the colleges were originally founded for the benefit of poor men. Long after they began to admit "gentlemen-commoners" with large incomes, many preserved on their statute books stipulations that none of their members should possess incomes of more than £5 a year. (No founder of a college seems to have foreseen the possibility of the value of money fluctuating.) Such regulations had become quite obsolete in the eighteenth century, though men who applied for admission to a college were required to swear that their incomes were below the sum mentioned. Some men, in view of the fact that they had to bind themselves to observe many other regulations that were quite obsolete, perjured themselves with a light heart, but the more conscientious evaded the difficulty by signing deeds before being enrolled on the books of a college, by which they assigned all their property to non-existing persons, which deeds were destroyed immediately afterwards.

In many colleges provision was made for supplying Fellows with clothing as well as with board and lodging, the idea being to ensure that they had all the necessities of life. This custom still survives at Oriel, where it was originated in 1504, the Provost and Senior Fellows each receiving every second year a present of five "virgates" of cloth. New College Fellows were given a suit of clothes every year on the understanding that they were not to be sold or pawned. After four years' wear a suit might,

however, be given away to a junior student. This allowance, if not luxurious, was ample in the days of home-spun cloth, when shoddy was unknown. Fellows of Corpus were granted an allowance for food and an allowance for clothing out of the general income, the surplus of which was to be placed in a fund, called the Tower Fund. In the course of years the cost of living rose and the college income increased, but allowances made to Fellows remained stationary, for the founder had made no provision for a fluctuation in the value of money. The reserve fund grew and the Fellows became poorer, till at last the allowances made them were absolutely inadequate. To meet the difficulty special allowances were made them for spices or extra suits of clothes, until in the year 1810 each Fellow, to make up for the deficiency in his income, was allowed sufficient money to buy no less than sixteen "liveries," a sum which, of course, he applied to other needs not foreseen by the founder.

It was originally stipulated that the clothes given to Fellows of colleges should be of uniform style and material. Anything in the way of "unaccustomed garments" was barred, and is still barred by the University statutes, which ordain that no member of the University may introduce a new fashion without the permission of the Vice-Chancellor and the heads of colleges and halls. (It would be interesting to know whether these authorities gave their formal sanction to the fancy waistcoats that a few

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years ago had a brief but beautiful career on the manly chests of some undergraduates.) Boots were especially prohibited. Shoes only might be worn, and these were to be black, or "as near black as possible." One of the most frequent charges made against Fellows by their personal enemies was that of wearing "unhonest" boots, an offence that seems to have been regarded as almost as grave as schism. Probably the boots excited comment, not because they were hob-nailed, but because they were such as courtiers wore, of bright-coloured material, with ridiculous high heels and long pointed toes fastened back to the knee with gold or silver chains. The University statutes, as revised by Archbishop Laud, forbade the wearing of anything that betokened pride or luxury, and especially prohibited "that absurd and assuming practice of walking publicly in boots." Perhaps jack-boots were referred to in this case. The latter prohibition has been abolished, but the former is still on the statute book. The statutes of Exeter ordain that its Fellows should wear priestly dress, "with no plaits round the necks of shirts like courtiers." This statute, and those which still require all members of the University to wear black or "subfusc" clothes, are of course relics of the time when all students were "clerks." The cap, gown, and white tie which in theory must always be worn, and which are worn at all University functions, are also survivals of clerical attire. The white tie as a necessary part of a student's costume

survives at Eton and some of the older public schools, and the bands worn by every Blue-coat boy at Christ's Hospital[1] retain the form of the sixteenth-century clerical collar. An attempt made after the Reformation to abandon academical dress was rebuked by Queen Elizabeth, who told the President of Magdalen that his gown and habit became him well, and she marvelled he was so straitlaced in objecting to wear it.

The fact that the University statutes solemnly forbid many things, such as keeping hawks or carrying spears, which no undergraduate is likely to want to do, is a standing joke at Oxford. The only weapons which may lawfully be carried are bows and arrows "for purposes of honest recreation," a concession which recalls the days when these were essentially the national weapons, to make himself proficient in the use of which was the duty of every patriot. During the Civil War a corps of six hundred undergraduates took the field on behalf of the King armed with bows and barbed arrows. What is still more amazing than the obsoleteness of the statutes is the ignorance of their nature on the part of those who at matriculation swear to observe them. A general idea of their provisions is orally handed down from one

[1] Many customs survive at Christ's Hospital, founded by Edward VI, which bear comparison with those which affected "poor students" of mediæval Oxford. The boys mend their own clothes (to a certain extent), clean their boots, make their beds, lay tables for meals, carry food from the buttery and kitchen to the Hall, and wait on each other at meals. A Bidding Prayer is read before grace at dinner.

generation of undergraduates to another, but few (perhaps because they are written in Latin) take the trouble to read them for themselves. A writer who set himself the task some years ago of "exposing the weaknesses of the University system," said: "It is notorious that the Statute Book still contains regulations prohibiting junior members of the University from indulging in the exhilarating amusement of playing marbles on the school's steps." Most men at Oxford to-day would confirm this statement; in fact, the statute referred to is more quoted than any other. Recently a man who had the tastes of a bookworm took the trouble to search for this statute and failed to find it. He applied for help to the editorial staff of one of the leading newspapers, most of whom were Oxford men. They assured their correspondent that the statute either existed or had been recently repealed. To confirm their statement they hunted for the statute first in the current edition of *Statuta et Decreta*, afterwards in earlier editions, and eventually discovered that no such regulation had ever existed. Some bygone humorist, getting the idea perhaps from the statutes of some other University, declared it to be one of the rules at Oxford, and were he alive to-day might pardonably chuckle at the thought that he had successfully deceived many generations of Oxford men too lazy to read the statute book for themselves.

XII

THE STORMY DAYS OF THE REFORMATION

"Those who die for a creed
God speed."

THE annals of Oxford during the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII, the reigns of Edward VI and Mary, and the earlier part of that of Elizabeth, are annals of gloom and dishonour, of intolerance and fanaticism, relieved by but one noble feature—the splendid courage of those, Roman Catholic and Protestant, who valued their consciences more than their comfort, their faith more than their lives. While some who cared little adapted their avowed faith to that of whoever was in power (and there were many who, like John Warner, the Warden of All Souls, retained Fellowships and offices in spite of the storms which burst on the University when Protestant succeeded Roman Catholic or Roman Catholic Protestant), others who cared much submitted to loss of emoluments and to death itself rather than refrain from propagating that which they believed to be the truth.

So far as Oxford is concerned, the assertion of the right

to disobey the King for conscience' sake dates from the founding of Cardinal College. In choosing its first members Wolsey's only care was to select men who were distinguished as adherents of the New Learning. His choice unwittingly fell on one or two men whom he himself would have described, had he enquired into their religious beliefs, as "hellish Lutherans." One of these, John Clarke, hitherto a Cambridge man, gathered round him a small society of men who met in his room to read and discuss St. Paul's epistles. These were soon joined by another little group who used to gather in Magdalen to read the Bible with Tyndal, by members of other colleges, and even by some of the members of the monastic colleges. As the "brotherhood," as it was called, grew, Clarke, realising the danger that overhung it, endeavoured to dissuade new members from joining it. Anthony Dalaber, a scholar of St. Alban Hall, to whom Clarke pointed out the danger of belonging to the brotherhood, entreated not to be refused admittance, saying, "He who has begun this on me will not forsake me, but will give me grace to continue to the end." "The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do," replied Clarke, kissing him. "Henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ."

At Christmas time in 1527 Thomas Garret, formerly a Fellow of Magdalen, came to Oxford from London, obtained lodgings in Cardinal College, and began, with

the help of the brotherhood, to circulate tracts and copies of Tyndal's first translation of the New Testament. What followed is recorded by Foxe, at that time a member of Brasenose, in his *Book of Martyrs.* By some means it came to Wolsey's ears that Lutheran literature was being sold in Oxford. He issued orders for Garret's arrest. One of the Proctors (Cole, of Magdalen Hall) was, however, a friend of Garret's, and warned him to escape. Dalaber, whose brother, a country clergyman, was in need of a curate, advised Garret to change his name and take the place. Garret accordingly started for Dorsetshire, but for some reason returned to Oxford and occupied his old rooms at Cardinal College, where he was arrested by the two Proctors. He was handed over to the care of the Vice-Chancellor or "Commissary," John Cotysford, Rector of Lincoln. Cotysford, who was an easy-going kind-hearted man, took Garret into his own lodgings at Lincoln, and when he had to attend evening chapel took no further precaution than to leave Garret locked in his sitting-room. As soon as he was out of the way some members of the brotherhood broke into the Commissary's lodgings and released him.

At this time Dalaber, who knew nothing of his return and arrest, was sitting in rooms which he then occupied in Gloucester College, the Benedictine foundation, some of the buildings of which now belong to Worcester College. To his great consternation and dis-

gust, Garret, whom he had supposed to be well on his way to Dorsetshire, suddenly burst in on him, and although he was not alone, began to tell the story of his arrest and escape. Dalaber's companion left the room, and Dalaber, after soundly upbraiding Garret, lent him a disguise and hurried him away, advising him to hide in Wales till he could take ship for Germany. Having got rid of him, Dalaber hurried to Cardinal College to tell Clarke, the head of the brotherhood, of what had happened. Pausing on the way to tell the news to Eden, a Fellow of Magdalen, he did not reach St. Frideswyde's Church (now the Cathedral) till evensong had begun. Seeing that it was too late to do anything at the moment, he mingled with the worshippers. "The Deans and the Canons were there in their grey amices," he wrote afterwards. "They were almost at the *magnificat* before I came thither. I stood at the choir-door and heard Master Taverner (another member of the brotherhood) play, but now my singing and music were turned into sighing and musing."

By this time the Commissary had discovered Garret's escape. "In comes Dr. Cotysford," continues Dalaber, "as fast as ever he could go, bareheaded, as pale as ashes, and to the Dean he goeth into the choir, where he was sitting in his stall, and talked with him very sorrowfully; what I know not; but whereof I might and did truly guess. I went aside from the choir-door to see and hear more.

Christchurch Cloisters and Cathedral Tower

The Commissary and the Dean came out of the choir, wonderfully troubled as it seemed."

While they were talking in came the most virulent enemy that the brotherhood had in Oxford, Dr. London, the Warden of New College. New College is much farther from Worcester than is the Cathedral. As Dr. London arrived so soon, it is to be supposed that the man who had overheard the story of Garret's escape ran to him at once and reported the matter. "About the middle of the church met them Dr. London, puffing, blustering, and blowing like a hungry and greedy lion seeking his prey. They talked together awhile; but the Commissary was much blamed by them, insomuch that he wept for sorrow. The doctors departed and sent abroad their servants and spies everywhere. Master Clarke, about the middle of compline, came forth of the choir. I followed him to his chamber and declared what had happened that afternoon."

Dalaber supped that evening with some brethren at Corpus, spent the night at St. Alban Hall, and next day returned to his rooms at Gloucester College to find that they had been searched. Called before the Principal of the College, he flatly denied any knowledge of Garret's movements ("I thought meetest though it were nothing so," he wrote in extenuation of the lie), and repeated his denial to Dr. Cotysford and Dr. London. The poor Commissary applied to astrologers for information as to

the escaped prisoner's whereabouts. Dr. London, being more practical, had the seaports watched, and organised a search so vigorously that Garret was taken soon afterwards near Bristol. Again he was handed over to Dr. Cotysford's care, but this time Dr. London saw to it that he was imprisoned in a strong cellar under the Commissary's rooms at Lincoln, in which salt fish was stored.

Dalaber was examined again by the Vice-Chancellor, the Dean of St. Frideswyde's Church, and Dr. London. The last so terrified him with threats of the rack and the "little ease"—a fiendishly devised prison chamber, in which it was impossible for a full-grown man either to stand upright or to lie at full length—that he revealed the names of about twenty of the brotherhood, who, including himself, were promptly sent to join Garret in the cellar at Lincoln College. In this close evil-smelling prison some of them died, including Clarke, who thus escaped burning, and who was refused the sacrament when he was on the point of death. Others recanted and were released, after they had marched in penitential procession from St. Mary's Church to the Cathedral by way of Carfax, when each had to fling a faggot that he carried on to a fire in which Garret's stock of books was burning. Garret was among those who recanted. He lived to become Latimer's chaplain, and later to wipe out the reproach of his timidity by martyrdom at Smithfield in 1540. John

Firth, another member of Cardinal College, was also burned at Smithfield in 1533.

One other member of the brotherhood, named Quinley, being a member of London's own college, was imprisoned in New College tower, where he died "half-sterved with colde and lack of food," after being refused the sacrament. When on the point of death, being asked what he would like to eat, he said he would like a warden-pie. Thinking he meant a pie made of warden pears, his friends told him that they were not obtainable. Quinley then explained, with grim humour, that he meant he would like a pie made of the Warden of New College, Dr. London, "'for such a warden pie might do me and Christes Church good; whereas other wardens from the tree can doo me no good at all.' Thus jesting at their tyranny, thorow the cheerfulness of a saffe conscience, he turned his face to the wall in the said belfry; and so after his prayers slept shweetly in the Lorde."

Dr. London himself, some years afterwards, was to experience something of the treatment to which he had subjected others. He was accused of perjury in connection with the trial of the Oxford martyrs and also of plotting against Cranmer, was sentenced to ride through the towns of Reading, Windsor, and Newbury, his face to the horse's tail, and to stand in the pillory of each town. After this he was flung into the Fleet prison, where he died in 1542.

The triumph of the Protestants when Edward VI succeeded to the throne, though not marked by such severe persecution as that of which the Roman Catholics were guilty in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary, was not conspicuous for tolerance. A Commission came to Oxford charged, apparently, to destroy anything that might by a stretch of the imagination be regarded as Popish. The most prominent Roman Catholics having fled on the approach of the Commission, it turned its attention to the destruction of Magdalen Chapel, the reredos and organ of All Souls, the books in Duke Humphrey's Library, and everything, it would seem, that was either beautiful or valuable. "Many manuscripts, guilty of no other superstition than red letters in the front or titles, were condemned to the fire. Such books wherein appeared angels were thought sufficient to be destroyed, because accounted Papish or diabolical, or both." Library shelves were used for firewood, and contented ignorance reigned in colleges that had been graced by the presence of Erasmus and Colet, Linacre and Sir Thomas More. New College alone saved its "superistitious" stained glass by asking permission to retain it till it could afford the cost of replacing it with plain glass.

So completely did Edward's Commission do its work, that when Mary came to the throne and the Mass superseded the Common Prayer Book there were scarcely any priests found to say it, or boys who knew how to make

the responses to it. Altars, vestments, and sacred vessels had to be bought afresh. The Protestant German theologians introduced by Edward did not wait for dismissal, but hurried back to the Continent. Their places were taken by Spanish friars introduced to restore the ancient form of worship as it was before Henry VIII tampered with it. Many of the books in the college libraries that had been spared by Edward's Commission were now destroyed by that of his successor. Some of the senior members of the University who had preached Protestant doctrines at Carfax now hurriedly changed sides and denounced them. Others fled. Many men abandoned theology for the safer study of medicine. Even the choir-boys at Magdalen, if they showed any reluctance to the Mass, were whipped into a change of opinion. An idea of the ecclesiastical tyranny that prevailed may be gathered from the fact that the choir-master of Magdalen, having discovered a country lad with a good voice who did not wish to join the Magdalen choir, brought him to Oxford in chains. Not being able to wreak vengeance on the foreign Protestant theologians, the Commissioners disinterred the body of the wife of one of them, Peter Martyr, who had been Abbot of Spoleto, near Naples, had come to Oxford on adopting the reformed doctrine, and had been made Regius Professor of Divinity there. A trial was held over the remains of the deceased lady. None could swear that she was a

heretic, for none had been able to speak her language. Evidence was therefore brought forward that she had once been a nun, and on this her remains were ordered to be placed in unconsecrated ground. The Dean of Christchurch accordingly buried them in a dung heap in his stable yard, where they lay till Elizabeth's time, when they were disinterred again and reburied in the Cathedral, mingled this time, to guard against further profanation, with the ashes of St. Frideswyde herself.

Mary paid Oxford the doubtful compliment of choosing it for the scene of the trial, degradation, and execution of Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer. The six senior members of the University of Cambridge came to Oxford to join with the senior members of the sister University in formal disputation (the result of which had already been decided) with the three prelates. It would be tedious to recall the long, formal, and protracted ceremonies in St. Mary's Church, the Divinity Schools, and the Cathedral that preceded the final scenes. They are described at length in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and summarised in every History of England. The way in which Ridley and Cranmer, by their deaths, "lit a candle in England that has never been put out" has commanded the admiration of men of every branch of the Christian faith. How Cranmer waited calmly for the end, regretting the cowardice that had led him formerly to recant, and calmly playing bowls in the Deanery garden at Christchurch while wait-

ing till the Pope should send his death-warrant, is almost equally well known. It might be wished that, to make the story more sublime, those who carried out the Queen's orders had treated their helpless prisoners with more courtesy, but they suffered some provocation. The three prelates, helpless in every other respect, could use their tongues and did so with effect, ridiculing and denouncing all that their opponents held most sacred.

The formal degradation of Cranmer may be recorded as typical of that of the others. He was brought to Christchurch and made to kneel while Bonner, Bishop of London (formerly a member of Broadgates Hall, now Pembroke College) pronounced his deposition, degradation, and severance from all the privileges of a priest. Bonner then took advantage of his position to address the crowd, jeering at the fallen old man; whereupon Cranmer flashed into wrath, and told him that his speech was unfitting a man who till that hour had been his subordinate. Coarse canvas imitations of an Archbishop's vestments had been prepared, and in these Cranmer was forcibly robed by "two or more mocking priests." Then one by one the robes were removed. A barber clipped his hair as the readiest way of removing the tonsure. Bonner scraped the tips of his fingers to desecrate the hand that had administered the unction to others. A threadbare yeoman bedel's gown was then thrown over his shoulders, and "a townsman's greasy

cap" was forced upon his head. "Now you are no longer my Lord," said Bonner jeeringly, as he handed him over to the secular power.

Once again, the day of his execution drawing near, the poor old man wavered and consented to recant. He was taken from Bocardo prison and led to St. Mary's, where Dr. Cole, Warden of New College, who had vigorously preached Protestant doctrines during Edward's reign, was to preach his execution sermon. The sermon was preached, Cranmer sitting on a stage that had been erected below the pulpit, and then Cole called back the departing congregation to hear Cranmer recant. Then followed a dramatic incident. Cranmer stood up in his place, recanted his recantation, and, broken with emotion, began to weep. "Stop the heretic's mouth, and take him away," cried Cole, and his gaolers dragged him down from the stage and led him out to die. The stake had been erected in front of Balliol College, and as the fire rose round him Cranmer held in the flame the hand that had in less heroic moments signed his recantation.

Another dispersion followed the death of Mary and the accession of Queen Elizabeth. "Two religions being now, as it were, on foot, divers of the chiefest of the University retired and absented themselves till they saw how affairs would proceed." Meanwhile, since every man's position was unsafe, the lawless element, as it had done in Lollard days, temporarily asserted itself. In July the Queen

nominated a Commission "to make a mild and gentle, not rigorous reformation." When they came to Oxford they had to hear charges brought by Protestants against Catholics that ranged in gravity from immorality, larceny, and defending the doctrine of Transubstantiation, to wearing gay clothes and calling the metrical psalms rhymes. All were forgiven, apparently, if only they would subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. Those who were suspected of clinging too closely to the old faith were ordered publicly to preach against the doctrines they were suspected of cherishing, and were thus compelled to declare themselves on one side or the other. A few men, such as Bonner, who had condemned no less than two hundred Protestants to death during Mary's reign, were imprisoned. Others who would not conform were allowed quietly to leave Oxford. Only at Merton was any resistance made. Here the Fellows barred the door in the face of the Warden nominated by Elizabeth, and were expelled for their obstinacy.

Some few there were who more or less forcibly resisted the re-establishment of Protestantism. The courage of some of these deserves our admiration as fully as does that of the Protestants martyred during Mary's reign. Several joined the Society of Jesus, and secretly preached obedience to Rome. Campion, a Fellow of St. John's, Mundyn of New College, and Harte of Lincoln, were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn. (It was part of Eliza-

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beth's policy to bring those who died for their faith into contempt by giving them a felon's death, regarding them as traitors rather than martyrs.) Saunders of New College died of cold and want among the bogs of Ireland. In Charles Kingsley's novel *Westward Ho!* the circumstances of Saunders' death are described. Kingsley treated him with contempt. Another Oxford Jesuit who finds a place in the novel, Parsons of Balliol, is treated with ridicule. There was nothing worthy of ridicule in a quixotic act of splendid courage which he performed at St. Mary's. He had set up a printing press in the recesses of a wood near Henley on which he printed a tract by Campion. Having struck off a number of copies he came to Oxford, broke into the University Church a few hours before the Commemoration Sermon was to be preached, and placed a copy of the tract on each seat. Had he been caught nothing could have saved him from the gallows. Fool, fanatic, traitor he may have been, but the courage of that action alone should save him from contempt. Gradually the storm of the Reformation period passed away, and Oxford entered on a more peaceful if more stagnant period.

XIII

ELIZABETHAN OXFORD

THE most glorious period of English history was not marked by any events of special interest at Oxford. When the storms of religious persecutions had passed away it relapsed into a condition of prosperous academic calm, from which the great events of Elizabeth's reign did little to arouse it. Men who had been exiled in Mary's reign, and driven by grinding poverty to "eat mice at Zurich," came back to their old colleges and endeavoured to pick up again the broken threads of their lives; but, with energies prematurely sapped by suffering, it is little wonder that they failed to make the University advance in line with the progress of the time. While at every fireside and every tavern in London men talked with enthusiasm of the wonderful voyages by sea and land that Englishmen were making —to Muscovy, to the White Sea, to the Levant, to Newfoundland, to the West Indies—Oxford (situated, it must be remembered, three days' journey inland) cared for none of these things. Lectures on geography and cosmo-

graphy, established at Magdalen to meet the new needs of the time, were neither delivered nor attended with enthusiasm.

One Oxford man, however, Richard Hakluyt, of Christchurch, felt the adventurous spirit of the age. When a boy at Westminster School he had been shown a map of the world, which filled him with such "rare delight" that he resolved, "by good assistance, to prosecute that knowledge and kind of literature if ever he should go to the University." At Christchurch he studied navigation and cartography, learned five or six of the languages most likely to help him, and then devoted himself to collecting and editing everything—from a merchant's bill of lading to a passage from Tacitus or the Anglo-Saxon chroniclers—that would serve to throw light on the geography of the world. He published the results of his labours in his *Principal Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, to which we owe almost all that we know of the history of exploration in the days of Frobisher and Drake. Embodied in this work was a letter by an Oxford man, Thomas Stephens, of New College, who went as a Jesuit missionary to India, that revealed to Englishmen the weakness of Portugal's power in Asia, and inspired them with the desire to obtain a share of the wealth of Oriental markets.

The youthful spirits of the students still kept the Proctors busy. Rows between northerners and south-

erners, between Welsh and English, between Puritans and Episcopalians, between "town" and "gown," produced as much noise, if not as much bloodshed, as the rows that had taken place in mediæval times. The fiercest row of Elizabeth's reign arose from the resentment aroused by Lord Norris having imprisoned a Fellow of Magdalen for stealing deer (with some other Magdalen men) in Shotover forest. When next Lord Norris came to Oxford he was attacked by a mob of students, "with their gowns girt, armed with divers sorts of weapons." Lord Norris's retainers drove them back till they were compelled to take refuge in St. Mary's, and the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors came out and "appeased the scholars, sending them away with fair words." Next day all the students were confined within their colleges, but when Lord Norris's train passed Magdalen on its way down the High Street, it was assailed with a shower of stones, thrown by Magdalen men from the top of their tower, so that they were obliged to protect themselves by holding boards and tables over their heads. "Some were wounded. Others endangered of their lives."

More seemly diversions were afforded by the visits of Elizabeth, who won the hearts of the Dons by listening patiently to their lengthy Latin speeches, and of the younger students by kissing them and telling them that they were not whipped enough. Many disputations were

held in her honour. One on the question, "Whether it was better to be ruled by the best law or the best ruler" must have required delicate handling in the presence of the autocratic Queen. The most interesting of these disputations was on the subject of whether Oxford or Cambridge was the older University. Oxford had for many years claimed to have been founded by Alfred the Great. The Cambridge men, when Queen Elizabeth visited them, had claimed that their University was founded by a Spaniard somewhere about the beginning of the Christian era. Instead of criticising this claim, Oxford's champion proved to his own satisfaction that his University was founded by King Membric 1009 B.C., with the assistance of Greek philosophers who came to England with Brute the Trojan after the fall of Troy. Cambridge, put on its mettle, discovered that it had been founded within two hundred years of the Deluge. The Oxford champion could, no doubt, have made out a case for his University, establishing for it a still greater antiquity, but perhaps he feared to be suspected of exaggeration; he left the victory with Cambridge.

Elizabeth, proud of her Welsh ancestry, graciously allowed herself to be mentioned as the founder of Jesus College, which, despite the absence of any provision to that effect in its statutes, has always been more or less a college for Welshmen. The funds for the foundation were provided by Hugh Ap-Rees, of whom little is known

JESUS COLLEGE FRONT QUADRANGLE

except that he was a graduate and a Doctor of Canon Law of the University. In the same reign Sir Thomas Bodley, formerly of Magdalen and Merton, founded the library which bears his name: to bookworms the happiest grubbing-ground in England.

XIV

OXFORD POETS AND DRAMATISTS

"The brilliant man who did not know and the learned man who did not think, met in the Second Class and disliked each other. The poet sat in the Third and laughed."—"*Some Thoughts on Examinations*" in *The Oxford Magazine.*

"OXFORD has turned out poets in more senses than one," said Swinburne when he himself went down without taking his degree, but she has produced very few. Only a small proportion of the many thousands of men who matriculated at the ancient University have eventually, by the help of—or in spite of—her teaching, become numbered with those who "on honey-dew have fed and drunk the milk of Paradise"; and of these a large proportion left or were expelled the University without receiving that hall-mark of a scholar—a degree. This is, perhaps, because the poetic temperament frets under restraint. A conscientious tutor endeavours to conduct his pupil along a straight, well-worn, and very dusty highway, whereas the latter, if the Muses

have kissed his lips (or if he thinks they have), infinitely prefers to wander off into winding lanes and gather flowers in the meadows.

Poetry and dry scholarship are bad yoke-fellows. From those who "filled the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth with sounds that echo still" down to those of our own day, few English poets have been University men, and fewer still scholars of any great repute. Before the New Learning infused romance and fire into the dull work of the student, still fewer poets were scholars. Mediæval Oxford claims only two poets—Piers Plowman, the champion of the poor and oppressed, who proclaimed in verse the new principles that his contemporary Wycliffe taught in the schools and the pulpit, and Thomas Barclay, the author of *The Ship of Fools*. Oriel claims to have sheltered them both, and though it cannot prove that they were members of the college, no one can prove that they were not.

When the New Learning was beginning to flood England with light, Oxford produced Sir Thomas Wyatt, whom Leland, Henry the Eighth's chaplain and librarian, compared with Ovid and Tibullus as "most passionate to bemoan the Perplexities of Love." The storm of the Reformation was favourable neither to poetry nor scholarship, but when the clouds cleared away in Elizabeth's reign, the University contributed its share of men towards the glorious choir that then

burst into immortal song, rivalling and excelling the Italian school that inspired it. Lyly, who could rhyme sweetly enough when he chose to shake himself free from classical pedantry and the artificiality of the Italian school, was a Magdalen man. Like many another poet Lyly was not appreciated by the University authorities. He refused to be driven along the dusty road that leads to a degree, and left the University without that honour, leaving behind him an unpaid bill for commons. No such scandal attaches to the name of Sir Philip Sidney, a member of Christchurch, who lodged at Broadgates Hall, whom Charles Kingsley took for his model in drawing the picture of Francis Leigh in *Westward Ho!*

Of the same generation as Lyly and Sidney are Lodge and Peele, the former of Trinity, the latter of Broadgates Hall, and Sir George Turbervile, a New College man, who was attached to the English Embassy in Russia, and wrote a number of very bad verses "describing the manners of the country and people." His poems are preserved in Hakluyt's *Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, not because of their intrinsic merit, but because Richard Hakluyt, in his rooms at Christchurch, collected and published everything on which he could lay his hands that described foreign countries.

In the next generation Oxford produced Francis

Beaumont and Thomas Heywood, both, like Peel, members of Broadgates Hall. Ben Jonson's connection with the University is somewhat vague. He seems to have been resident for a time at Christchurch, but his degree, when he took it, was an honorary one. Sir William Davenant, who succeeded Ben Jonson as poet laureate, was a member of Lincoln. Tradition says that he was Shakespeare's godson. He must, at any rate, often have seen the great dramatist, who used to stop at Oxford and rest at the Crown Inn in Cornmarket Street, which was kept by Davenant's father. Davenant commanded a Royalist regiment during the Civil War, attempted to escape to America on the downfall of his sovereign's cause, was captured, and would have been executed but for the kindly intervention of Milton.

The wit, brilliance, and licentiousness of English literature in the reign of Charles II are fully represented by "the wicked Earl of Rochester," a member of Wadham, and its intolerable coarseness and profligacy by Wycherly, the doubtful honour of producing whom belongs to Queen's. At the same period New College produced Thomas Ken, the author of "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," who obtained the Bishopric of Bath and Wells because he was the only clergyman at the Court of Charles II who did not grovel to his mistress, Nell Gwynn, to obtain it. It is tantalising to know practically nothing of the careers of

any of these poets while they were *in statu pupillari*. It would be most interesting to know whether Sidney's genius was recognised and appreciated, whether Rochester ever screwed up a Don's door, whether the estimable Bishop Ken was ever "progged" for a youthful folly. Bare records of matriculation and rarer records of receiving degrees are for the most part all we can learn about the connection of these poets with Oxford. The little bit of scandal about Lyly's indebtedness to his college buttery we owe not to the admiration of a biographer, but to the commercial instinct of a Bursar, who was more interested in trying to collect 23s. from him than in watching his intellect and personality develop; but we may conjecture that Rochester's attendance at lectures was exceptionally praiseworthy (or his influence in high quarters extraordinary), for the University so far modified its usual practice in his favour as to make him a Master of Arts at the age of sixteen, two years after he had matriculated.

Of the undergraduate careers of later poets and dramatists, however, we know a little, though not as much as we should like to know. Samuel Foote, of Worcester College, dramatist and actor, had a career at Oxford such as is least approved by Proctors. He was noted, at a period when men dressed gaily, for the extravagance of his silver-laced coat and the daintiness of his ruffles. Had he confined himself to such breaches of the statutes

as wearing raiment that was neither black nor "subfusc," he would not have fallen out with the authorities, who in his days were servilely tolerant of the caprices of gentlemen commoners. When, however, disguised as Punch, he burlesqued the Provost of Worcester's idiosyncrasies in the High Street (Dr. Johnson declared his humour to be inimitable), the authorities were goaded to action. The Provost of Worcester was one of those men who do not use a short word if they can find a longer one to take its place. When he began to lecture Foote, the latter interrupted his harangue at the first polysyllable, took a ponderous dictionary from under his arm, found its meaning, and requested his pompous Principal to proceed. It is hardly surprising that after this piece of impertinence an early excuse was sought for terminating Foote's University career. This was found when with "a company not very worshipful," and footmen attired in fantastic livery, he drove a coach-and-six down the High Street. After this escapade it was arranged that he should take his name voluntarily off his college's books.

Southey had a brief career at Balliol before being sent down for holding Unitarian opinions. A rebel against convention, he had little respect for the archaic formalities observed when an undergraduate is matriculated, which he described in somewhat bald verse to a friend who a year later entered Christchurch.

(1)

"Oh, my dear Thomas,
Indeed I promise
That I was very glad
Without examination
Or any vexation
To swear away like mad.

(2)

As they provide them
To dare my fidem
And go to the Vice-Chancellor;
And, nothing loth,
To buy an oath
Of which he was the seller.

(3)

He then took a book,
Very shabby to look,
Gave me—wasn't that
kind?
For which nice gift
Indeed I left
But one-pound-four behind.

(4)

Now I'm on clover
When all is over,
Without being examinated,
I'm capped, gown'd and swore,
And, what is more,
To conclude, matriculated."

There are fifty-four more verses of this doggerel, of which the chief interest is that the future Poet Laureate improvised them at the age of eighteen, writing them from beginning to end without laying down his pen. Southey displayed little love of Aristotle, and was probably not an inspiring pupil. "You won't learn anything from my lectures, Mr. Southey," said one of his tutors; "so if you have any studies of your own you had better pursue them." Many budding poets would probably wish Dons of the present generation to show equal tolerance. The young rebel had the eccentricity, or pluck, to break away from an absurd but

well-established custom. It was necessary to make an elaborate toilette for dinner. Not only were swallow-tail coats, knee breeches, silk stockings and pumps worn, but every man had to have his hair freshly powdered every day before dining. As there was only one college barber, juniors had to waste every day a weary amount of time while waiting to be powdered. Southey, ostensibly to show sympathy with the Jacobin movement, but really to avoid this waste of time, started the fashion of dining with unpowdered hair, and though the seniors warned him that he would be stoned for a radical, his contemporaries soon followed his example. Though Southey was sent down without a degree the University forgave him when his opinions had become more orthodox and conventional and he became Poet Laureate. It wiped out the past by conferring on him the D.C.L. degree.

Walter Savage Landor was at Trinity while Southey was at Balliol. He too went down without a degree. On one occasion, while giving a wine to some Christchurch men, he was annoyed by the conduct of a man with whose political opinions he disagreed, who was entertaining "servitors and other raff" in a room on the opposite side of the quadrangle. An abusive controversy between the two parties was ended by the "raff" closing the shutters of their windows. This annoyed Landor so much that he took his gun, which was loaded with

duckshot, and fired at the closed shutters. It was not a very murderous action, but he prevaricated in giving an account of it to the college authorities, and was sent down for the double offence.

The next poet to be rejected by the University was Shelley, a man peculiarly ill-adapted to tramp the dusty road which Dons regard as the one all men should follow. His career at Oxford has been described by his friend and biographer, Thomas Hogg, who was a fellow-undergraduate of his at University College. It was in the pre-reformation days of the University, and college discipline was very lax. Shelley was required once a week to translate an article from the *Spectator* into Latin prose. Finding that no comment was ever made either of praise or blame, he conjectured that his exercises were never read, and consequently often amused himself by substituting verse for prose, but never had the satisfaction of knowing whether the change was detected. The dull and dusty course prescribed for him by dull and dusty Dons, who took no pains to ascertain whether he worked or not, had no attraction for Shelley. At this period of his life he cared more for natural science than for anything else. His rooms were littered with books, boots, paper, philosophical instruments, pistols, linen, crockery, and phials innumerable. An electrical machine, an air-pump, a solar microscope and other appliances crowded the table, and money, stockings, prints, crucibles, bags and boxes were

scattered all over the floor, as if, says Hogg, "the young chemist, in order to analyse the mystery of creation, had endeavoured first to reconstruct the primeval chaos."

Shelley's magnetic personality and keen enthusiasm won from Hogg an affection that was often sorely tried. Sometimes Hogg would have to loiter for an hour or more around a pond on a wintry afternoon while Shelley amused himself, despite the cutting north-east wind, by sailing paper boats, making ducks and drakes, or heaving the biggest stones he could find into the water. Sometimes he would set up a target and shoot at it with a pistol, which, though he was a good marksman, he handled so carelessly that Hogg went in terror of his life.

The poet's career at Oxford terminated abruptly after less than a year. Excited by the new doctrines and wild ideals brought to life by the French Revolution—they upset many a soberer mind than Shelley's—he published an anonymous pamphlet on *The Necessity for Atheism.* He was called before a committee, consisting of the Master of University College and several of the Fellows, to whom he refused either to acknowledge or deny the authorship of the pamphlet. They accordingly earned the wrath of posterity by expelling him. Their action in so doing roused the bitterest indignation of Hogg, who pointed out that they were tolerant enough to sloth and drunkenness. It is difficult, however, to see how they could have ignored an offence which was a direct breach

of the vows which Shelley had made on his matriculation. One might suppose that the poet, being oddly out of his element at the University, would have cared little whether he were expelled or not. The decree, however, affected him deeply. His sensitive nature was keenly hurt by the disgrace, and he was strongly attached to the curious life that he had led as an undergraduate. He was to feel many more hard knocks from an unsympathetic world before he found rest at last under the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

XV

THE SIEGE OF OXFORD

THERE is a story current in Oxford to the effect that an American tourist, struck by the beauty of the lawn in the garden of St. John's College, took the gardener aside, pressed a five-pound note into his hand, and entreated him to reveal the secret which enabled him to bring a lawn to such a state of perfection. The gardener, it is said, pocketed the money, and then told the American that the way to do it was to mow and roll the lawn diligently for two hundred years. (Some versions of the anecdote make it three hundred, and even four hundred years, and it is told of other colleges—Trinity, Wadham, New College, Balliol, and Christchurch. These details vary with the taste and partiality of the narrator.) Like many oral traditions, the anecdote will not bear the cold light of scientific criticism, for few of the lawns in the college gardens are more than a hundred years old. Yet the spirit of the story is true. Many of the Oxford gardens, though most have changed their actual shape from one generation to another, have delighted the eyes of many whose bones have long since

crumbled to dust. Could we repeople them with the ghosts of those who in the past have sauntered along their paths and rested in the shade of their trees, we should see a varied throng of loiterers—dandies of the early Victorian period and ladies in huge crinolines; Georgian bucks and bashful girls, such as those whose portraits were drawn by Jane Austen and Fanny Burney; prim Puritanic maidens and gay, long-haired cavaliers; fat red-nosed parsons in threadbare cassocks and dingy bands, the prototypes of Fielding's Parson Adams, and bejewelled beruffed gallants of the courts of James and Elizabeth. Earlier types we should hardly see. "Men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely," as Francis Bacon said; and the sixteenth century was drawing to its close before gardens began to make perfect the beauty of a city that long ere this was richly embellished with the glory of Gothic architecture.

Some colleges, such as New College and Balliol, had gardens in pre-Reformation days, but they were devoted to strictly practical uses. Small plots were assigned to each junior member of the college, who was required to produce vegetables from it for the common table. During the Tudor period gardeners began to experiment in fruit production, and it is probable that the Fellows of Merton and Balliol tried to make peach trees produce pomegranates by sprinkling the flower with goats' milk, and hopefully grafted vines on cherry trees, apples on elms,

and pears on hawthorns, in accordance with the advice given by those who wrote the gardening books of the period. In Elizabethan times more attention was paid to beauty. Flower-beds were made in geometric patterns that harmonised with the architecture of the building which they adorned. "Covert walks" between fantastically clipped hedges of yew, shade alleys of intertwining willows and wych elms, mazes of privet were laid out, and "meanders, circles, semi-circles, windings and intricate turnings, walks in intervals whereof are all grass plots." At the Restoration period all the colleges had gardens, laid out for the most part in the formal Italian style then in vogue. Some of these have developed into the beautiful gardens that rest the eyes of toil-worn Dons to-day. Others, unhappily, such as those of Jesus College and Brasenose, have been sacrificed for the purpose of adding additional buildings.

Each of the principal gardens and groves in turn has had its day as a pleasure resort for the fashionable inhabitants of the city. The Broad Walk in Christchurch meadows was the fashionable resort when "Tom Brown" and "Verdant Green" were undergraduates. Merton had that honour "in teacup times of hoop and hood and when the patch was worn," but the scandalous flirtations indulged in there between the fair city "toasts" and the gentlemen-commoners so horrified the Fellows of that college that they closed their garden to the public for

evermore, and drove the gay company to Magdalen walks. When "Beau" Nash, as an undergraduate of Jesus College, first practised the courtly demeanour that was to make him the uncrowned king of Bath, the wit and beauty of Oxford used to meet in the gardens of St. John's, and when Charles the First's Court took refuge in loyal Oxford, the courtiers and ladies who were in personal attendance on the King and Queen monopolised the gardens of Christchurch, Corpus, and Merton, and those who were not attached to the Royal person used to meet in the gardens of Trinity.

"Our grove was the Daphne for the ladies and their gallants to walke in," wrote a Trinity College man of that period, "and many times my Lady Isabella Thynne would make her entrey with a theorbo or lute played before her. I have heard her play on it in the grove myself, which she did rarely."

To compare Trinity Gardens of to-day with what they were when Lady Isabella used to walk there, let us imagine ourselves standing by the Park Street gate, under the shade of the old English yew, and looking westwards towards the garden quadrangle. To-day we may look across the great lawn towards a grey quadrangle, brightened with gay-flowered creepers, the buildings on three sides of which are among the earliest specimens of Italian architecture in Oxford. On the right of the lawn is a border filled with carnations and

CHRISTCHURCH MEADOWS: THE FASHIONABLE RESORT WHEN "TOM BROWN" AND "VERDANT GREEN" WERE UNDERGRADUATES

Canterbury bells, pansies and sweet-williams. On the left, shading a broad gravel walk, is a grove of limes, the branches of which are trained to arch over the walk and sweep down to the ground on either side, so that the vista of the avenue resembles the nave and two aisles of a church. Undergraduates, pipe in mouth, dressed in cool white flannels (how horrified the ghost of Laud the disciplinarian would be, were he to return to Oxford), lounge under the trees, and American tourists stride swiftly from one point of interest to another at the heels of garrulous professional guides.

If, while we stand there, time were to roll back two hundred and fifty years, the garden quadrangle would disappear, and the backs of Balliol and St. John's would be revealed. A great part of what is now the lawn would be cut into formal-shaped angular flower-beds. A wilderness-garden, such as Bacon described, would take the place of the lime avenue, and one might imagine that some Gargantuan baby had been playing in the garden with wooden toys from his Noah's ark, for at intervals, here and there, would stand box and yew trees trimmed in stiff imitation of peacocks and other birds whose outlines do not present too great difficulties to arboreal artists.

The air would be heavy with the sullen roar of Royalist cannon, answering that of the Parliamentarian troops that are encamped to the north of the city. (Had

we stood there at one particular moment during the siege we might have heard a crash and seen brick-dust fly up from the gateway tower of St. John's as a cannon-ball hit it, the only recorded occasion during the siege of Oxford on which a missile did any damage.) From Broad Street and St. Giles Street we should hear the lowing of oxen and the bleating of sheep captured by Prince Rupert in some daring foray and driven into the city to provide meat for its beleaguered inhabitants. We should see Dons and their pupils assembled on the grass, and standing in line while a burly sergeant taught them how to handle their pikes or load their arquebuses. After an hour or so of drill they would break away, put up targets, and practise with a weapon to which they were more accustomed—the long bow—the use of which had for generations been specially sanctioned by the University statutes. Their arrows have been fitted with barbed heads by the King's armourers, and the scholars are anxious to compare the weapons they now use in earnest with those with which they passed idle hours in less strenuous days.

Looking on at the archery practice we should see groups of fair ladies who have flocked with the Court into the congested city, each, perhaps, attended by some gallant Royalist officer, released for an hour or two from the trenches. They laugh and flirt and ogle and make pretty speeches to one another, recking little of the fate that is

soon to fall on them and their cause. If Lady Isabella Thynne is there with her lute, perhaps a number of them sit in the shade, take turns to sing a madrigal, and amuse themselves as Boccaccio's heroes and heroines amused themselves in the gardens near Florence while the plague raged in that city. Lastly, a comic (and, indeed, a tragic) element in the little drama is afforded by the President of Trinity, the venerable Dr. Kettell, who, resenting the intrusion of the gay throng, was deliberately and impartially rude to everyone who entered the garden of his college.

There was some excuse for the old man's ill-temper, for the war, which afforded pleasurable excitement to the younger members of the University, fell hardly on its senior members. Charles had taken from the colleges first their ready money, then their stores of ancient, valuable, and highly cherished plate. "Wee doe hereby desire you that you will send unto Vs all such plate of what kind soever wch belongs to your Colledge," he demanded of each college in turn, "promising you to see the same iustly repayd unto you after the rate of 5s. the ounce for white and 5s. 6d. for guilt Plate as soon as God shall enable Vs, for Assure yourselves Wee shall neuer let Persons of whom Wee have so great a care to suffer for their affection unto Vs but shall take speciall order for the repayment of what you have already lent to Vs according to Our promise." If any college attempted

to resist the Royal demand, Charles declared that its fortune would not survive his own downfall if he failed to crush the rebellion, therefore for its own sake as well as his it must contribute its utmost to his support. Charles promised to repay all loans "on the honour of a king"; but as he glibly attached the same formula a dozen times a day to the wildest and most contradictory promises, even the most loyal of those who had dealings with him knew how little they could rely on his "kingly word."

Besides having their chests emptied by the King's demands, the colleges were deprived by the war of much of their usual source of income. They could not collect their rents from their tenants owing to the disturbed state of the country, and the fact that the Parliament had forbidden tenants of colleges to pay rent which it knew would ultimately be swept into the King's coffers. Many of the junior members of the University had been sent down in order that their college rooms might be occupied by soldiers and members of the Court; others had entered the Royal service, with the result that the colleges lost their fees. Notwithstanding the fact that the revenues of the colleges and the University were so much reduced, every Fellow was required to maintain a foot-soldier in the Royal service at a cost to himself of four shillings a week, and each member of the University between the ages of sixteen and sixty was compelled either to labour

TRINITY COLLEGE FROM THE GARDEN

at the building of defence works one day in each week or to hire a substitute.

The venerable Master of Trinity had, moreover, other less selfish grounds for his resentment. The influence of the Court and the Army tended to upset the discipline, to interfere with the work, and to contaminate the morals of the students under his care. Though he strove gallantly to keep up the ordinary routine of services, lectures, and disputations, attendance at these dwindled week by week. Rowdy soldiers forced their way into his lecture-room and interrupted his work. One of them exasperated the old man by deliberately and wantonly breaking the hour-glass with which he timed his lectures. The ladies of the Court disgusted him by appearing not only in his garden but in his chapel in costumes of which he did not approve, "half-dressed like angels." On one occasion Dr. Kettell's wrath boiled over. One day Lady Isabella Thynne (the lady who used to play the theorbo in Trinity Gardens) "and fine Miss Fenshawe, her great and intimate friend, who lay at our college, would have a frolick to make a visit to the President." Dr. Kettell, so far from enjoying the "frolick," rated Lady Isabella Thynne in the following words: "Madam, your husband and father I bred up here, and I knew your grandfather. I know you to be a gentlewoman. I will not say you are a whore; but get you gone for a very woman."

Dr. Kettell's indignation might justly have been shared

by all the senior members of the University. On the University fell the brunt of the defence, while a crowd of useless courtiers spent their time in wantonness and idleness. When the townsfolk, most of whom were at heart in sympathy with the Parliament, refused to take their share in constructing defences for the city, Charles, instead of resolutely insisting on their obedience, weakly yielded to their sullen resistance, and laid the work they should have performed on the already overburdened shoulders of the gownsmen. It is wonderful that the loyalty of the University stood the strain that was put upon it. Impoverishment and hardship were of course inevitable, but the King repaid all sacrifices made on his behalf with contemptuous ingratitude. In defiance of college and University statutes he distributed fellowships and degrees (which were not his to give) among his favourites. Promises "on the honour of a king" were broken as often and as carelessly as they were made; yet the University remained splendidly loyal to the end.

When the end came at last and Oxford submitted to Fairfax, it was under condition that the University should retain its privileges, that the colleges should enjoy their ancient form of government, subordinate to the immediate authority and power of Parliament, that all churches, chapels, colleges, halls, libraries, and schools should be preserved from defacement and spoliation, and that all members of the University who should be expelled by order

of Parliament, while immediately losing their right to vote in Convocation, should be allowed to retain their emoluments for six months from the date of the surrender.

The struggle had brought the University to the brink of ruin. The number of its members was terribly reduced. Its money, and that of all the colleges, was almost exhausted. The colleges were out of repair, for the courtiers and soldiers who had lodged in them had allowed their rooms to fall into a neglected state. Provisions were costly and money was scarce. Poverty was rife in the town, and the colleges, despite their own troubles, found means to alleviate the general distress by sharing what little they had with those whose need was still sorer; the members of All Souls, in particular, resolved to allow themselves but one meal a day from September till Christmas, and for a longer period if necessary, in order the better to relieve the needs of the starving poor.

XVI

PURITAN OXFORD

ONE of the great advantages of Oxford, to the kind of tourist who inspects its colleges and University buildings between the arrival of a train from London and the departure of one for Stratford-on-Avon, is that much of the greatest historical and archæological interest lies within a very small area. It is said that a vigorous walker with a competent guide can see all that there is to be seen, provided he contents himself with the exteriors of buildings, within the space of a couple of hours, and assimilate the essentials of the history of the University in what, by a stretch of metaphor, may be called homœopathic doses. The tourist, for example, may stand in the shade of St. Mary's Church, round which University life centred before the first stone of the first college was laid, having Brasenose on his left, and All Souls on his right, and the Divinity Schools in front of him. With the exception of the Radcliffe camera (an eighteenth-century building), he is surrounded by institutions that date from pre-Reformation times. In fifty seconds, if he walk briskly, he will pass beyond the site of the old city wall

and stand beneath the Sheldonian Theatre, built in the latter part of the seventeenth century. In one minute more he may peer through a gateway and see the roofs of Trinity and St. John's, both colleges of the Tudor period, and turning find on his right the Stuart foundation of Wadham. A few yards further on he may stand on the site of the earthworks thrown up by the Royalists to protect the north of the city during the Civil War. Further than this the antiquarian tourist will not go, for beyond lies modern Oxford, the Oxford of Keble College and the suburbs.

To "do" Oxford at this pace allows little time for musing and communion with the spirit of the past, is provocative of mental indigestion and—for the Oxford pavements are very hard—will probably make the tourist footsore. It is wise, therefore, to turn inside in imagination at this point, to pass through the portals of Wadham and find a shady seat in its incomparable garden.

The grounds of Wadham are such as may be seen around a hundred country mansions. They owe their beauty not to wealth and variety of flowers, broad expanses of well-kept lawn, or rose-clad pergolas, but to the perfect harmony that exists between them and the buildings. The latter afford an example of the late Gothic style of architecture at its best, the style that immediately preceded the creations of Sir Christopher Wren and Inigo Jones. They date from the year 1613, and so

perfectly do they preserve the spirit of an earlier type that James Ferguson, one of the greatest authorities of his day on the history of architecture, maintained that they belonged to the previous century, and stuck to his opinion, too, even when confronted with documents that proved the contrary. In harmony with the Stuart buildings the Wadham garden is such as may be seen through massive griffin-guarded gates around some old country mansion ; lawns, swept by the branches of stately cedars and set with holly, yew, and sycamore, from which men rode forth to fight for King or Parliament. There is little there to arouse the interest of a botanist, save, perhaps, the rare tulip tree in the Wardens' close, whose large cup-shaped, orange-coloured flowers are seldom seen in England, nor, though here and there stand trim flower-beds and borders where poppies and Canterbury bells peep through a tangle of nasturtiums and sweet peas, is there great wealth of colour. A magnificent copper beech and giant cedars, with enough of holly and laurel to emphasise their height, are the dominant features of the Wadham garden. Of two giant cedars, that until two years ago were the joy and pride of Wadham men, one is sadly battered, and one has disappeared altogether, for the untimely snowstorm that fell at the end of April, 1908, brought the one to the ground and crippled the other. To the north of the Fellows' garden, the Wardens' close opens on to a large meadow, surrounded by long shady

Wadham College Garden Front

walks and dotted with shade trees, in which a hundred and odd years ago Warden Wills did not scorn to take off his coat and gown and work side by side with his haymakers. A shaded terrace, said by some to have been raised in 1806 by Warden Tournay, by others to have been part of the earthwork raised in 1644 for the defence of the city, runs the full length of its east side.

The history of each of Oxford's colleges has some special interest. That of Wadham is noteworthy in that it disproved the gloomy prophecies of those who were expelled when Charles lost his throne, to the effect that learning at Oxford would be killed by the gloomy fanaticism of the Roundheads. So far from languishing and dying in sympathy with the fortunes of the King, Wadham prospered exceedingly under the rule of the Commonwealth. When Evelyn, the diarist, visited his friend the Warden of Wadham in 1654, he found in his lodgings "variety of shadows, dials, perspective, and many other artificial, mathematical, and magical curiosities, a way wiser, a thermometer, a monstrous magnet —most of them his own, and of that prodigious young scholar, Mr. Chr. Wren," a proof that some members of the college at least were not mouldering in ignoble sloth. Not only had Wadham at this period the honour of sheltering for four years the genius who, besides being an astronomer and one of the leading mathematicians of the century, designed the Brasenose Chapel, "Tom"

Tower in Christchurch, the garden quadrangle of Trinity, and the Sheldonian Theatre, and was, with the exception of the forgotten artists of the Middle Ages, the greatest of all English architects. It had the even greater honour of seeing the birth of the "experimental philosophical club," which began to meet once a week in the year 1649 in the Warden's lodgings, and developed thirteen years later into the famous Royal Society. The prosperity of Wadham was not due to its being, like Merton, at heart in sympathy with the Parliamentarian cause. One of its members had been brought before the Star Chamber for saying that the King "was fitter to stand with an apron in a Cheapside shop and to cry 'What lack you?' than to govern the Kingdom," and several fought on the side of the Parliament, notably Robert Blake, who harried the Royal forces in the West Country, and later, on the high seas, lowered the pride of Holland and Spain, but others (the reputed author of *Eikon Basilike* was a Wadham man) stood for the King, and the college was loyalist at heart till Cromwell's commission ejected the Warden, nine out of thirteen Fellows, nine out of fourteen scholars, and all the commoners but three.

The legality of the Parliament's action in ejecting all members of the University who would not acknowledge its authority is so much a matter of opinion that it cannot be discussed here. Reference should, however,

SHELDONIAN THEATRE AND BODLEIAN LIBRARY FROM THE RECTOR'S GARDEN, EXETER COLLEGE

be made to the mildness of its methods in an age that was not remarkable for tolerance.

Parliamentary troops had occupied Oxford before it was garrisoned by the King's forces. Their leader, Lord Saye and Sele, did little harm to the colleges or their property. He took an inventory of the plate of the various colleges, confiscated that of Christchurch and University College as a punishment for its having been hidden from him, ordered some books which he regarded as popish to be publicly burned in the street, and disarmed the members of Merton, Corpus, Magdalen, and Christchurch. His soldiers, though they lounged about the cathedral, on their way back from picketing their horses in Christchurch meadow, and admired "the idolatry of painted windows," did no damage until, when the troops were marching out of the city a fortnight later, one Roundhead fired his matchlock at the image of the Virgin Mary over the porch of St. Mary's Church, and another in rivalry fired at the image of Our Saviour over All Souls.

After the surrender of the city to its troops, Parliament endeavoured to obtain the submission of the University by persuasion rather than by force. It sent seven Presbyterian divines with power to preach in any Oxford church, and a commission to win the University over to their point of view. The arguments of these learned gentlemen were however opposed from an un-

expected quarter. Roundheads were divided into two parties, Presbyterians and Independents, the former representing the religious and the latter the political side of the revolution. According to that staunch loyalist Anthony Wood, "the former for the most part preached nothing but damnation; the other not, but rather for liberty. Yet both joyne togeather to plucke downe and silence the prelaticall preachers or at least expose their way to scorne." Before the Presbyterian ministers arrived in Oxford, members of the Independent party had begun to expound their views in the schools and the churches. They regarded the coming of the Presbyterians as an unwarrantable intrusion, and disputed with them so hotly that the amused Royalists were left very much to their own devices. In 1647 a Commission was appointed to visit the University and correct "abuses and disorders, especially of late times committed there." Among its members were three Fellows of Merton and its Warden, Sir Nathaniel Brent the Principal of Magdalen Hall, and an old member of Broadgates Hall, and the notorious William Prynne, formerly of Oriel, Laud's great opponent, whose virulent attacks on the Queen had cost him his ears.

The University authorities were cited to appear before the Commission at the Convocation House on September 29th between the hours of nine and eleven. They met and sat there, awaiting the arrival of the members of

RUSKIN'S CORNER IN WADHAM GARDEN

the Commission, who, however, having all attended a service at St. Mary's at eight o'clock, were prevented by the length of the sermon from keeping the appointment they had made. When the Commission arrived at the door of the Convocation House, therefore, they met the Vice-Chancellor with his attendant Bedels, the Doctors and the Proctors coming out. On November 11th the Commission had better luck. It passed sentence of expulsion against six Heads of colleges, three canons of Christchurch, and the two Proctors (Dr. Samuel Fell, Dean of Christchurch and Vice-Chancellor, had meanwhile been summoned to London and imprisoned). In spite of the Commission's orders "not a man stirred from his place or removed." For four months the contest went on. University authorities were expelled again and again and refused to take any notice of their expulsion. At last the Commission called in troops and began to use force. They visited every college with a drum and a guard of musketeers, and every member of it, from its Head down to its youngest commoner, from the Fellows to the cooks, butlers, barbers, and porters, was summoned to appear before it. If they promised to submit unconditionally to the authority of Parliament, they were allowed to keep their places. If they refused to do so, they were conducted five miles beyond the city (where many of them were robbed by the troopers who escorted them), and told that whoever

came back would be liable to be hanged as a spy. Delay was granted to some who, like the President of St. John's, were married and had little children, but all sooner or later had to submit or go. More than half the members of the University left sooner than submit, many of them in so doing abandoning a livelihood for conscience' sake.

Mrs. Fell, wife of the Dean of Christchurch and mother of that more famous Dr. Fell whom an anonymous poet found it impossible to love, sturdily refused to leave her husband's house, even when its door had been broken open. Seeing that they could not move her without physical force, they maintained a siege until the arrival of the new Chancellor, Herbert Earl of Pembroke, who ordered her to be put in a chair, carried out, and deposited in "Tom" Quad. Her children were carried out on boards. Before the soldiers left her Mrs. Fell cried out, "Though I am carried away in a chair, I doubt not that I shall come back on my own legs"—and so she did, for, though her husband died soon afterwards, her son John Fell was made Dean of Christchurch soon after the Restoration, and received his mother in the house from which she had been carried twelve years before.

Discipline under the Puritan regime was very strict. A future Bishop of Gloucester was deprived of his commons for throwing bread at the windows of his friends in

Christchurch. Two men found walking in the town at ten o'clock at night without their gowns were sentenced —the one to write out the principal parts of Aristotle's *Ethics*, the other to write out and commit to memory all the definitions and divisions of Aristotle's *Logic*. Another scholar, for having some rowdy men in his rooms without leave, was ordered to work in the Corpus Library every day from morning to evening prayer for a month. No one was allowed to wear powder, knots of ribbons, riding-boots or spurs. Inquisitions were held into every man's morals and religious opinions. A candidate for a fellowship had to answer satisfactorily questions as to whether he was of the number of the elect, what was the occasion of his conversion, upon what day of the month and hour of the day it happened, how it was carried on, and when completed. All tutors had to hold frequent prayer-meetings. Every member of the University had to attend three services every Sunday (besides one or two during the week), one in his college chapel, one in any parish church he chose to attend, and one at St. Mary's, the University Church. In the evening, from six till nine, every man below the rank of Master of Arts had to attend a class held by his tutor, and give a summary of the sermons he had heard that day. In Lincoln, and perhaps in other colleges, prayers in chapel were extempore, and every man in turn, from the senior Fellow to the youngest freshman, had to pray aloud, which must

have been nervous work for a junior, for he was in danger of being summoned before the Rector to justify any divergence from approved theological opinions that might have appeared in the course of his prayers.

The drastic measures of the Parliament's Commission had the effect of establishing Roundhead influence among the University authorities, but many of the scholars, despite their submission to Parliament, remained Royalist at heart. On May 29th, 1647, some members of New College had a bonfire to celebrate Prince Charles' birthday. Three months afterwards a daring conspiracy that had its origin in New College, but in which members of other colleges were implicated, was set on foot to surprise and disarm the garrison, seize the ammunition stored in New College tower, and march to the relief of Colchester. On the whole the conspirators were treated leniently, but a servant of Lincoln was sentenced to stand in the pillory, have his ears clipped, and be whipped at the tail of a cart, and a servant of Pembroke was tortured by having his hands, which were tied behind his back, burned with a slow match. The latter lived to have his loyalty rewarded with the post of Yeoman-Bedel.

As in the rest of England so at Oxford, Puritanism began to wane long before the restoration of Charles II. Scholars used to amuse themselves with private theatricals in Gloucester Hall, and though this amusement was carried on more or less in secret, it would have been

discovered and punished if the University authorities had maintained the ardour with which at first they enforced Puritan standards of conduct. An attempt made by the Vice-Chancellor in 1658 to abolish academical costumes as "relics of popery and rags of the scarlet whore," was hotly opposed in Convocation, and a riot broke out when the Vice-Chancellor lost his temper and told the Proctor to hold his tongue. Gradually the various colleges in their own chapels returned to the observances of the Church of England. When Evelyn visited New College in 1654, he found its chapel "in its ancient garb, notwithstanding the scrupulositie of the times," and surplices were worn again in Magdalen before the Restoration.

In view of the severity of the discipline under the Puritan regime, and the insistence on frequent and lengthy church services, it might be supposed that all offences against morality and decent conduct committed at this time were the actions of those who submitted to, but did not pretend to sympathise with, the Puritan authorities. It is surprising, therefore, to learn that many men, jobbed into Fellowships by the Parliamentary Commission, led dissolute lives, and that those appointed to Magdalen were guilty of an action little distinguishable from theft. Soon after they had taken the places of those Fellows of Magdalen who would not submit to the authority of Parliament, they discovered in an old chest £1500 worth of gold coins of Edward the Fourth's time. This was a

reserve fund established by William of Waynflete to be used in cases of emergency, but the Puritan Fellows, without enquiring into its origin or purpose, calmly divided up the money among themselves.

On the whole, however, the influence of the Puritans in Oxford was to improve both conduct and scholarship at the University. When at the Restoration men who had been ejected twelve years before came back to their old colleges, they were surprised to find that learning was more advanced than at any time since Laud's iron grip on the University had relaxed. They accounted for the phenomenon by saying that learning was so hardy a plant that not even Puritanism could kill it.

XVII

THE GENTLE ART OF RAGGING

"There was a young person of New
Who a stone at a man's window threw,
So the whole of the place
Was sent down in disgrace,
For there's wisdom and justice in New."

Lays of Modern Oxford, by ADON.

HORSEPLAY in some form or other has played a conspicuous part in Oxford life, from the days of the riotous chamberdekyns down to the present day. Unorganised, haphazard rowdyism, prompted by the high spirits of a moment, such as the screwing up of a tutor's door or the lighting of unauthorised bonfires in a college quadrangle, is too large a subject to be dealt with in a single chapter, but some forms of ragging that for a time became recognised and traditional are worth noticing.

From early days down to the middle of the seventeenth century every freshman had to undergo an initiation ceremony before he could mix on equal terms with his fellow-students. Of the ceremony prevalent in mediæval times

there is an amusing account given in Rashdall's *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*. Soon after his arrival at the University the freshman would be visited in his room by a number of students. Ignoring his presence they would pretend to be offended by an intolerable smell. After some hesitation they would pretend to discover that the smell emanated from the unhappy freshman himself. Someone would then declare that the freshman was a bejaunus (*bec jaune*, or yellow-beak), an animal usually supposed to be fabulous, that could be turned into a human being if his beastlike attributes were removed. The students would then apply themselves to the noble task of making a bejaunus human, with all the ardour of men who themselves had been through the ordeal. After covering his face with some sticky substance he would be shaved. He would be placed on a table and pummelled into human shape. His nose would be ground on a grindstone, and then he would be made to drink a mixture of salt and water.

The *bec jaune*, by this time semi-human, would then be declared to have suffered so severely as to be in danger of dying, so that he must confess and be shriven without delay. A self-appointed confessor would pretend to receive the confession, which he repeated for the benefit of the audience. (The nature of the sins attributed by the confessor to the bejaunus in days when such romances as those of Boccaccio were popular may be imagined.) For

penance the freshman would be ordered to entertain his tormentors with as much wine as he could afford, after which he was received on equal terms into the brotherhood of students.

There is no actual record of this ceremony having been performed at Oxford, but as it was common at all continental universities, and as a relic of it has survived at the Scotch University of St. Andrews, it is reasonable to suppose that it was at one time in force at Oxford, especially as William of Wykeham, in drawing up the statutes of New College, expressly forbade "that most vile and horrid sport of shaving beards which is wont to be practised on the night preceding the Inception of a Master of Arts."

When Anthony Wood was a student at Merton he had to undergo an initiation ceremony on the evening of Shrove Tuesday. The Fellows left the hall after telling the students not to be too rowdy. Each freshman had then to take off his gown and bands, and, "if possible, to make himself look like a scoundrell." Each then stood in turn on a form and made a speech. If the speech were good, the freshman was rewarded with a cup of "cawdle"; if mediocre, he was forced to drink cawdle flavoured with salt; if bad, he had not only to drink the nauseous mixture, but also to submit to having his chin "tucked" (i.e. rasped by the pointed thumb-nail of the senior student). He then had to kiss an old shoe handed him by the chief

cook, after which he was admitted to the fellowship of senior students.

Anthony Wood left on record the speech he delivered when he went through the ordeal. According to modern standards of humour, nothing could be duller.

"Most reverend seniors. May it please your gravities to admit into your presence a kitten of the Muses, and a meer frog of Helicon to croak the cataracts of his plumbeous cerebrosity before your sagacious ingenuities. . . . I will not sublimate nor tonitruate words, nor swell into gigantick streins; such towring ebullitions do not exuberate in my Aganippe, being at the lowest ebb." There is a good deal more of it, but enough has been quoted. If he was not well tucked after delivering such a speech, he should have been.

The custom was abolished at Exeter through the action of Anthony Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury. Rather than submit to be "tucked," he organised a resistance amongst his fellow-freshmen, who resisted the seniors with such vigour that the latter appealed to the Rector, Dr. Prideaux, for protection. Prideaux, "being always favourable to youth offending out of courage," refused to interfere, and the seniors were badly beaten. In other colleges the custom was suppressed by the Presbyterian Heads of Colleges who were appointed during the Commonwealth.

One form of "rag" that developed spontaneously and

had a brief but glorious career before being suppressed by the authorities is worth mentioning. In the summer of 1863 the undergraduates of one of the colleges used to sit and sip their wine out of doors after dinner. One day a man discovered that he could propel his chair backwards at a considerable pace (the chair was on castors, and the path was hard and smooth) by pressing the ground with his feet. He started off backwards round the quad, shouting a challenge to anyone to race him. Races (three times round the quadrangle and no handicapping) were soon organised, each competitor being steered verbally by his backers. A question as to a foul gave rise to a dispute, which, it was decided, should be referred to the trial by combat. Each disputant placed his chair at one end of the quadrangle, and at a given signal propelled himself backwards at his unseen foe with such force that one chair or the other must necessarily be smashed or upset.

This new form of sport soon took the place of the tamer races. Jousts became the popular amusement. Men brought sofas, other men's for choice, and with a crew of four to each entered the arena. Having the double advantage of weight and of being able to see where they were going, the sofa-men were able to send the arm-chair men spinning in every direction. There was nothing for the arm-chair men to do but to combine against the sofa-men. Single combats gave place to *mêlées*. Night after night the battle raged. Furniture shops became emptied

of their heaviest stock, and carpenters worked overtime to repair damages. At last one night a tournament was followed by a wine party, to which a number of men from other colleges had been invited. Midnight struck, and these men realised that they would have to appear before their respective deans on the following morning. Since if one must be hanged it is as well to be hanged for a sheep as a lamb, they proposed to return to the quad and renew the combat, and the battle began afresh under the stars. Presently one man, hotly pursued, sought to escape by propelling his chair through the archway into the Fellows' quadrangle. Someone shouted "Tally-ho!" The *mêlée* gave place to a hunt, and soon the Fellows were disturbed by the crashing of oak on oak and the shouts of the combatants. This was too much for Dons to stand. The nightcapped head of the Dean appeared at an upper window proclaiming peace and demanding names. Next morning every undergraduate was given the alternative of being sent down or giving his promise that he would never tilt again. Thus ended as quickly as it had begun the gentle and joyous sport of jousting with armchairs.

"Mob Quad," Merton College

XVIII

JACOBITE OXFORD

"Here's a health to the King and a lasting peace,
To faction an end, to wealth increase;
Come, let's drink it while we've breath,
For there's no drinking after death,
And he that will this toast deny,
Down among the dead men let him lie."

WHEN Charles II returned to his kingdom and his throne, the University—that had remained Royalist at heart despite outward conformity to the authority of Parliament—returned to its allegiance. The Heads of Colleges who had been appointed by the Parliament were ejected, and with them enough Puritan Fellows to make room for those Royalist Fellows who, having been ejected by the Parliament twelve years before, now wished to return. Of those who had been expelled, however, some were dead, some had gone abroad, some had settled down into other ways of life, some had disqualified themselves for holding fellowships by marrying or changing their religion. Only a sixth returned to resume the old life at Oxford. Nonconformists were expelled,

among whom was William Penn the Quaker, who ultimately left England and founded the American colony that bore his name, and the Republican works of Milton, Knox, Baxter, and George Buchanan were publicly burned at Carfax.

There was some slight resistance to the restoration of the old regime. One Puritan Fellow of Lincoln barricaded himself in his rooms when ordered to leave them, and laid about him with a sword when his door was burst open. Some Puritan undergraduates of Magdalen spread a report that the devil had been seen in a surplice, and to give colour to the rumour one of their number blackened his face, donned a surplice, and showed himself in "Tom" Quad at twilight. When this joke fell flat they played a Rabelaisian and wholly unquotable prank with the surplices of the Christchurch choristers. Merton refused to elect the new Warden chosen for it by Archbishop Juxon, who on his arrival found the college gates closed and locked. By bribing a servant he managed to obtain access by way of the stables to the chapel, where he went through the ceremony of installing himself, and for the moment was content. A week later he returned, and finding the college still barricaded, obtained help, surrounded it, and by cutting off all food supplies eventually starved the resisters into submission. Victors and vanquished then had an amicable banquet at the expense of the college's revenues, and goodwill was restored.

In Oxford, as in the rest of England, the downfall of Puritanism was celebrated by throwing off the restraints imposed by morality, sobriety, and good conduct. On Michaelmas Day, 1662, some undergraduates [1] organised a raid on neighbouring poultry-runs. In the row that ensued one of them was wounded with a pitchfork, another was put in the stocks at Wolvercote, and only rescued after some sharp fighting. The undergraduates then smashed all the windows in Wolvercote, and marched triumphantly back to Oxford in procession behind a goose that they had impaled on a pole. Undergraduates under the Puritan regime may not, perhaps, have been too pious to steal poultry, but they would never have dared to do it so openly.

"To study was fanaticism; to be moderate was downright rebellion," wrote Anthony Wood of this period. Drunkenness became common. The Master of Balliol

[1] It is difficult to determine when the term "undergraduate" took the place of the word "student," and came into general and approved use. In 1624 a freshman killed one of his colleagues for calling him an undergraduate, and it seems that it was considered that he acted under strong provocation, for he was allowed to plead benefit of clergy, and though he was sentenced to have the letter "M" branded on the palm of his hand, even this punishment was remitted on the petition of the Vice-Chancellor. Modern junior members of the University strongly object to being called "students," but have no objection whatever to being called "undergraduates," a term which distinguishes them from the junior members of recently founded universities. The author has not been able to discover exactly at what date junior members of the University should be referred to by a word that was once a term of reproach, so, as he would rather offend a dead student than a live undergraduate, he has introduced the term at the period when modern Oxford may be said to have begun.

Ontario

remonstrated with the Fellows for "adding art to their natural stupidity" by tippling at a "dingy, horrid, scandalous ale-house, fit for none but draymen and tinkers." The Fellows returned an answer that made the Master appeal to the Vice-Chancellor to support his authority. The latter, however, decreed that "there was no hurt in ale," an opinion which the disappointed Master of Balliol announced to the tippling Fellows, adding sarcastically that they might now be "sots by authority."

Of graver offences against morality there is no particular record, perhaps because these were now lightly regarded; but the fact that the University at this period produced Wycherley and Rochester is perhaps significant. Wycherley, of Queen's, is notorious in the history of English literature as the author of the coarsest and most licentious dramas of a coarse and licentious age. The character of the witty libertine, the Earl of Rochester, of Wadham, who told Charles that he "never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one," may perhaps be judged from the following, one of the few of his verses which may be quoted without Bowdlerising:—

"Then talk not of inconstancy,
False heart and broken vows;
If I by miracle can be
This live-long minute true to thee,
'Tis all that Heaven allows."

The influence of Charles and his courtiers who came to Oxford to avoid the plague in 1665, did not of course tend to raise the tone of the University. Charles was lodged, as his father had been, in Christchurch. His queen and one of his mistresses had apartments in Merton, in anticipation of which honour Merton locked up what little plate it had managed to accumulate since the Civil War.

The most conspicuous member of the University at this time was the man of whom an anonymous poet wrote—

> "I do not like thee, Dr. Fell,
> The reason why I cannot tell;
> But only this I know full well,
> I do not like thee, Dr. Fell."

Dr. Fell, the Dean of Christchurch and Vice-Chancellor, whose father, a former Dean of the College, had been imprisoned by the Puritan Commission of 1648, and whose mother had given so much trouble to the soldiers who evicted her from Christchurch, was a man of tremendous energy and unswerving purpose. He worked as hard as Laud had done before him to preserve discipline, to encourage sound learning, and to make examinations a reality instead of the farce that they often were. Perhaps the cause of the dislike which the author of the above verse

felt for the doctor was due to the former having been "ploughed."

The standard both of conduct and of scholarship at the University was low. Appointments to fellowships were obtained through the influence of the King's mistresses, but Fell and a few others combined to make this period notable in the history of the University. Archbishop Sheldon employed Wren to build the Sheldonian Theatre, in order that St. Mary's Church should no longer be profaned by the coarse jests with which academical functions were enlivened. Evelyn secured the Arundel marbles for the University. Elias Ashmole bequeathed to it the museum that bears his name, the first public museum in England. Fell built the famous Tom Tower from designs by Wren, and helped to found the Clarendon Press. Science, helped by the work of the Royal Society, the dilettante interest of the King, and the foundation of the Ashmolean museum, now for the first time took an honourable place among the work of Oxford men.

Considering the tremendous sacrifices that the University had made for Charles I, it might be supposed that Charles II and James II would have had the decency to respect its privileges. Both, however, grossly and unconstitutionally interfered with the election of Heads of Houses. Charles directed the Fellows of Magdalen to elect a President of his own choosing,

threatening that if they disobeyed they should know "what it is to disrespect your king," and forced Fell to deprive John Locke of his studentship at Christchurch. James went further. To re-establish Roman Catholicism he designed to compel the Universities, where alone the clergy could be trained, to adopt his views. Encouraged by the loyalty which Oxford had displayed in arming to resist Monmouth's invasion, and celebrating his defeat by consuming many barrels of beer and wine, he appointed a Papist to the Deanery of Christchurch, directed University College to retain its master, who had forfeited his post by going over to Rome, and directed Magdalen to appoint as its President a Roman Catholic of infamous character. Magdalen resisted. A long struggle ensued, in which, though the victory ultimately went to James, all the honour remained with the college. The notorious Judge Jeffreys, acting on instructions from the King, terminated the struggle by forcibly evicting in one day twenty-five out of twenty-eight Fellows. Their places were taken by Papists, and the Roman Catholic ritual was restored in the college chapel. Oxford became restive under such tyranny, and James sent troops to overcome the University (so that the Proctors dared not visit taverns in the course of their duties lest they should be compelled to treat the soldiers). Magdalen's gallant resistance to the King, however, had aroused not only Oxford but the nation, and in the following year, when a packed jury,

overawed by the threats of a London mob, had refused to convict the seven Bishops for refusal to order his Declaration of Indulgence to be read in the churches, James saw that he had gone too far, and hurriedly ordered the ejected Magdalen Fellows to be reinstated. In the special Act, held at Oxford to celebrate the coronation of William III and Mary II, a speech was delivered from the text *Magdalena ridens.*

For a brief period Oxford rejoiced at the fall of the King who had treated her so badly, and supported William of Orange. Her enthusiasm soon cooled, however, and changed to dislike when the new King—fearing poison, it is said—refused to take part in a banquet that had been prepared for him in the schools. From that time Oxford as a whole recovered her staunch loyalty to the Stuarts. Lincoln and Merton, and in a lesser degree Christchurch, Exeter, and Wadham, were Whig in sympathy, but the members of all the other colleges, with a few isolated exceptions, were passionately Tory and Jacobite.

Whig members of Tory colleges were persecuted in a dozen ways, and they had little chance of concealing their opinions, for freshmen, on the very day perhaps that they in matriculating had sworn allegiance to the reigning monarch, were required to drink "to the King over the water" or take the consequences in the form of every kind of petty persecution that his colleagues and his

seniors could devise, from "sconcing" to the withholding of his degree.

The Whigs naturally combined for mutual encouragement and support, and formed a Constitution Club, which used to meet and dine whenever the birthday of any member of the House of Hanover gave excuse for an expression of loyalty. On these occasions they would have woodcocks for dinner, the heads of which they cut off "in contempt for the memory of the Blessed Martyr." They would have had calf's head, but the host of the tavern at which they met, fearing for his windows, refused to supply it.

So daring were the Jacobites in their sympathies that a hum of applause greeted a preacher in the University pulpit who cleverly misquoted 1 Corinthians xiii. 7, to the effect that charity "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, *restoreth* all things." Whig members of the congregation denounced the sermon as seditious to the Vice-Chancellor, who refused to take any notice of it, and who in fact had himself publicly congratulated the preacher. The Attorney-General was then appealed to, by which time the preacher had prudently lost the manuscript of his sermon, so that nothing could be done.

During the rebellion of the Earl of Mar, in 1715, Jacobitism in Oxford was so open that the Government thought it prudent to garrison Oxford with soldiers and

place it under martial law. Cambridge had a short time before been presented by the Crown with Bishop Moore's magnificent library of thirty thousand volumes. The two circumstances inspired some Oxford wit with the following lines:—

"King George, observing with judicious eyes
The state of both his universities,
To Oxford sent a troop of horse; and why?
That learned body wanted loyalty.
To Cambridge books he sent, as well discerning
How much that loyal body wanted learning."

This was neat, but the reply of a Cambridge man was neater:—

"The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,
For Tories own no argument but force.
With equal skill to Cambridge books he sent,
For Whigs admit no force but argument."

Jacobitism lingered at Oxford till George III broke up the Whig oligarchy and gave his political friendship to the Tories, and even to-day a youthful spirited undergraduate may be found who passes his glass over the water-bottle when the King's health is drunk.

XIX

MERTON GARDENS AND MAGDALEN WALKS

"Here's to the charmer, whose dimples we prize,
Now to the maid who has none, Sir;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, Sir."

IT is necessary to search the history of bygone generations for the origin of almost every Oxford custom, from the wearing of white ties by those who appear before Dons to be examined, to the form which the annual summer-term boat-races take. White ties are worn at examinations because the University authorities have never thoroughly awoke to the fact that undergraduates in these days do not (as mediæval University students did) belong to a minor clerical order. The boat-races in single file, in which each boat endeavours to catch up to and bump the boat ahead of it, originated in the early part of the nineteenth century. Members of various rowing clubs used to row down to dine at Sandford. On their return, made valiant by good cheer, two boats would often have an informal race over a short course. Later, it became the

custom for all boats to race, each trying to catch the one ahead of it, the order of starting being determined by the order in which the boats could struggle out of Iffley Lock.

We must search the past, too, for an explanation of Merton's inhospitality in forbidding the public access to its lovely garden. The garden is as rich in historical association as it is beautiful to the eye. It contains a mulberry tree whose fruit may have been picked by James I when that most learned fool in Christendom came to Oxford to parade his erudition before the members of the University. It has sinuous paths shaded by limes and sycamores, where the ill-fated Charles may have sought in the society of his queen rest from the cares that pressed upon him. A terrace stands where a part of the old city wall once stood. Here a culverin was mounted during the Civil War, and here in the chill dawn of one of those sad days a cavalier waved his hat and cried "God save the King!" to give the signal for his own death for cowardice in the face of the enemy. It was perhaps in this garden, when the ladies of Charles the Second's wanton Court lodged in Merton, that the brilliant Earl of Rochester captivated the lady—"a great fortune"—with whom at the age of eighteen he eloped. Certain it is that the forerunners of the white and red roses that cling to-day to the grey walls of the college, and of the carnations and sweet-williams, the pansies and lilies that grace its borders, delighted the eyes of Richard Steele, who left Merton

MERTON COLLEGE FROM MERTON GARDENS

without a degree but enriched by the love of all who knew him.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Merton Garden was the fashionable meeting-place of Oxford society. Here grave Dons in cassocks and bands exchanged snuff-boxes, and discussed the latest issue of the *Tatler* with gaily dressed, belaced, and bewigged gallants. Groups of undergraduates stared with insolent admiration at young ladies who passed and repassed them in couples, simpering and giggling, affecting to be much abashed at the scrutiny of their admirers, but firing over their shoulders Parthian shots of challenge and encouragement out of their bright eyes. A great proportion of Oxford undergraduates in the reigns of Anne and George I were wealthy gentleman-commoners, who were allowed by their tutors to be as idle as they liked in consideration of paying double fees. A considerable proportion of the population of the town consisted of young and beautiful girls, whose parents had sent them to Oxford with the deliberate hope that they would provide for their futures by marrying rich men. This being the case, a large number of undergraduates, having no work that they need do and no form of athletics to distract their attention, passed a great portion of their time in the society of the Oxford "toasts" (as these ladies were called), or whiled away the weary hours when this was impossible in composing sonnets to the objects of their admiration, or toasting them at the

coffee-houses. Inimitable portraits of the fops of the eighteenth century are to be found in the pages of the *Tatler*, and later in the novels of Fanny Burney. We know that they behaved towards the ladies whom they honoured with their attentions as one would flatter a conceited goddess who lacked a sense of humour, and that afterwards, among members of their own sex, they would discuss the characters and attributes of these ladies with as much freedom as a stable-boy discusses the points of a race-horse. We may people Merton Gardens in our imaginations with a score of characters taken from Evelina or Clarissa Harlowe. Standards of conduct change. The taste of the present day hesitates whether to despise most the empty-headed gallants who pursued the "toasts," or the mercenary girls who in their own way pursued the undergraduates.

There were those in the University, however, who did not approve the warfare of sighing and ogling that went on daily in Merton Gardens. A poet in a score of empty-headed verses conveyed the suggestion that if Paris came to Merton Garden he would find more difficulty in deciding which of its occupants was most beautiful than he had in awarding the golden apple to the fairest of the three goddesses who challenged his decision on the slopes of Ida. These verses provoked a retort from one who declared that "Oxford beauties are not always to be Phyllised up in fulsom Panegyrick," and then

satirised the undergraduate of his day in the following lines :—

"In vain his tutor with a watchful eye
Rebukes his folly, warns him to beware,
Aspire beyond the common Mereton crowd
In vain, the lewd, the impudent, and proud.
Beauty in Oxford is a thing so scarce
That all thy Panegyrick is turned to farce."

So great a scandal did the Oxford beauties cause that it was seriously suggested that the Proctors should use their arbitrary powers to drive them out of the town, as they would have expelled and would expel to-day any woman known to have offended "contra bonos mores." The conduct of the "toasts" and their admirers eventually became so outrageous that the Merton authorities in 1720 decided to close their garden to the public. Phyllis, Cloe, Brunella, Mrs. Elizabeth Dimple, and the rest of them excluded from Merton had to make Magdalen Walks their promenade, and since that day Merton Garden has been closed to the public. Nearly two centuries have elapsed since then. Perhaps the Merton authorities may some day be induced to relent, and once more admit the public, so long as it behaves itself, to one of Oxford's beauty spots.

Magdalen Walks lie along the three sides of an island formed by two branches of the lazy Cherwell. On the inside of the triangle is a meadow, gay in the springtime

with buttercups and daisies, and especially a wild flower that is particularly characteristic of the Oxford country-side—the daintily drooping, bell-shaped fritillary. The paths are shaded by branches of beeches, elms, chestnuts, hawthorns, and sycamores, around whose roots grow wild hyacinths, periwinkles, and ivy; and here and there, through an opening in the branches, the lounger may see a punt moored to the bank (punters on the Cherwell seldom ascend higher than the first shady mooring-place they may find) in which a fair member of Somerville or Lady Margaret Hall trails her fingers in the cool water, or an undergraduate in flannels, an unopened text-book by his side, his back among the cushions, yields to the advice of the Persian sage (or was it Fitzgerald?), "Ah! take the cash and let the credit go."

A grove of trees stood here in the days of Charles I, but when Oxford was threatened with a siege they had to be felled lest they should afford cover to the besiegers. During the Commonwealth the Puritan authorities re-planted the Walks with trees, but at the Restoration these were grubbed up by a staunch Royalist who could not bear the thought of walking in avenues that had been planted by fanatics. Fortunately for successive generations, he replaced the uprooted trees with others, and the beautiful groves of the present day are the result. The northern-most walk is sacred to the memory of Addison, of Queen's

and Magdalen. Landor declared that he spent the happiest hours of his undergraduate days here, and many a one since his day has had cause to feel that the planter of the Walks might well have the honour of mention in the University Bidding Prayer.

XX

ST. JOHN'S GARDENS

"Bring hether the Pinke and purple Cullambine
With gelliflowers,
Bring coronations and sops in wine
Worn of Paramowers;
Strowe me the ground with Daffadowndillies
And cowslips and Kingcups and loved Lillies."

SPENSER.

UNTIL the founding of the Royal Society, Oxford men paid little attention to any study apart from pure scholarship. The great schoolman, Roger Bacon, made experiments in natural science, and the study of medicine came into Oxford with the New Learning; but, with these exceptions, little attention was paid before the days of the Commonwealth to any study other than that of dead languages, theology, and civil and canon law.

As early as 1632, however, the University became possessed of a botanical garden. In that year the Earl of Danby established it "with a view especially to the Faculty of Medicine," on a piece of land belonging to

Magdalen which in mediæval days had been used as a Jewish cemetery. Evelyn, the diarist, who visited it in the year 1664, found there "two large locust trees, and as many plantana and some rare plants." Of a visit he made to it ten years earlier he wrote—

"We went to the Physick garden, where the sensitive plant was shew'd us for a greate wonder. There grew canes, olive-trees, rhubarb, but no extraordinary curiosities, besides very good fruit, which when the ladies had tasted, we returned to our lodgings."

The garden does not lack beauty, but it is stamped with the formalism so dear to the curators of institutions that are devoted to the improvement of the public mind. Under its gateway, designed by Inigo Jones, stands a commonplace turnstile. Fine shade trees overhang rectangular paths, between which representative specimens of plants are grouped according to their natural orders. Ferns, palms, orchids, and water-lilies are sheltered in greenhouses, neither more nor less ugly than other greenhouses, that, however, harmonise ill with the architecture of the stone gateway between them. The garden has beauty, because beauty is as inseparable from a garden as the fragrance of mignonette is from the flower itself; but it is a place in which it is more appropriate to speak of *ranunculus* and *bellis* than of buttercup and daisy.

There is another Oxford garden, however—that of St.

John's—which delights both the botanist and the artist. Sherard, one of the earliest and greatest of English botanists, who described himself as "the drudge of all the gardens of Europe," was a Fellow of John's. His enthusiasm has most happily fallen on the present Bursar, the Rev. H. J. Bidder, who values some rare plant from the Caucasus or the Faröe Islands more than all the wealth of Ormuz or of Ind; and in setting himself to master the difficulties that confront all gardeners has won for himself a reputation second to that of no one in Europe.

The rockery is the pride and glory of St. John's. To the ordinary man the heap of coral rag-stone in the north-west corner of the garden appears like a pile of jewels set in dull grey silver. An artist of the pre-Raphaelite school must feel his pulse beat faster as his eye is caught by the dainty outline of whorl and leaf of the tiny, delicate, filigree-like plants that cling to the grey stone, and the thousand points of colour, white and grey, mauve and heliotrope, orange and brown, with which it is spangled. To the botanist the little rock-garden is a thing to examine with a magnifying glass, a thing to make him break the tenth commandment forthwith (and the eighth, too, if no one is about), a thing to linger and sigh over by the hour and talk about for weeks to come. Here are poppies from the Himalayas, brooms from Dalmatia and the Shipka Pass, the mauve Ramondia

from the Pyrenees, and a large form of Saxifraga cotyledon, brought by one of the Fellows from Iceland. (Maledictions on the dull botanists who label their treasures with names as uninspiring as algebraical formulæ!) Every variety of Alpine pink is here, and nearly every variety of erodium and geranium, one of which is pure white, together with a rare specimen of Rodgersia pinnata, and many forms of stone-crop, fern-leaved corydalis, St. John's wort, harebell, edelweiss, rock-rose, and rock-jasmine. The rock-garden contains more than a dozen varieties of campanula, including the rare and dainty C. waldsteiniana, twenty at least of house-leek, more than one of mountain flax, and one of Saxifraga peltata, the stems of which are fully a yard high and the leaves two feet across. Much of the success of the rock-garden is due to the care with which each flower is given soil and situation resembling as closely as possible those from which it came. The cyclobothra, for instance, is planted in a mixture of sand and half-decayed larch needles. Sempervivum arachnoideum (what a name!), that hates the damp, is persuaded to cling to the dry perpendicular face of the stone, and such plants as the Himalayan poppy and the mocassin flower, which like only a midday sun, are accommodated in clefts whose shape resembles their native mountain gorges.

In another corner of the garden is a tennis court shaded by a weeping beech and a cedar, shut in by clumps of

shrubs. There is a stately and spacious lawn bordered with shrubs and flowers; blue bush, Mexican orange flower, Chinese vine, snowy bramble from the Rocky Mountains, spiræa, syringa, and hawthorn, almost every one of which is as valuable as it is beautiful, mingle with pansy, fox-glove, pink, meadow rue, sun-rose, delphinium, blue phlox, white martagon lily, and a great variety of irises, many of which have been raised from seed. And beyond the lawn rises the garden front of the college, as beautiful as is possible for living gardeners and architects, who died nearly three hundred years ago, to make it. Sweet peas and jasmine brighten the grey old stone, and wistaria taps at the richly carved oriel windows.

"The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." Archbishop Laud is generally best remembered as a man whose blind zeal to make all men conform to his lofty but narrow religious ideals sowed in England the seed of the Civil War, which almost ruined the University he loved. Oxford has more kindly memories of the man who reformed the University statutes, revived scholarship, restored discipline, built the Convocation House, and gave this garden front, one of the most beautiful of Oxford's beautiful buildings, to the college of which he was Commoner, Reading Scholar, Divinity Lecturer, President and second Founder, as well as Proctor and afterwards Vice-Chancellor of the University.

St. John's College Garden Front

St. John's is rich in historical associations. It and Trinity, its neighbour, were the last colleges to be founded in Roman Catholic Oxford. It occupies the site and part of the buildings of the monastic college of St. Bernard, disestablished by Henry VIII, as Trinity does those of Durham, another monastic college. Almost all the colleges established before John's were founded by wealthy ecclesiastics. John's, founded in 1555 by Sir Thomas White, of the Company of Merchant Taylors, marks the period that witnessed under the Tudors the rise of the merchant princes. When James I came to Oxford and expressed his pedantic wish that he might be chained up in the Bodleian Library like the books, John's men entertained him with a play, throughout the performance of which the King (it lasted till one in the morning) slept placidly. Charles I dined at the college in 1636, and was also entertained with a merry play. Years afterwards it was a John's man, Archbishop Juxon, who was with him in his last moments on the scaffold in Whitehall.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the garden of St. John's, like the gardens of Trinity and Merton and Magdalen Walks in earlier days, was used as a fashionable meeting-place by members of the University. Some of the greatest statesmen of the eighteenth century may have walked here. We may imagine Charles James Fox stroll listlessly through the garden for a brief hour snatched

from incessant reading. If we conjure up his pale face at all we may imagine it disfigured with bruises, for rows with townsmen were, according to tradition, almost the sole form of recreation which Fox in his undergraduate days allowed himself. Lord North, a future Prime Minister, may have occasionally come in from Trinity, and, some years earlier, William Pitt, also of Trinity, the greatest Prime Minister of English history, may have walked here.

Gilbert White, of Selborne, a Fellow of Magdalen, almost certainly walked in John's garden, not only that he might watch the nesting of the bullfinches and chaffinches, wrens and blackcaps, many generations of which have sheltered in its trees, but also that he might display to the fashionable throng the "feather-topp'd, grizzled wig," for which he paid £2 5s. when he came up to Oxford to take his turn in the office of Proctor. Adam Smith of Balliol, Gibbon of Magdalen, Johnson of Pembroke may all have walked in the garden. Each of these had a very poor opinion of scholarship at the University in his day. Adam Smith declared that lectures were mere construing lessons, in which the tutor seldom or never made any comment or gave any assistance. Johnson, after attending one lecture and coming to the conclusion that he knew more than the lecturer, "a very worthy but a heavy man," went off to occupy his time more agreeably in sliding in Christ-

church Meadows, and when fined for his negligence protested indignantly, "Sir, you have sconced me twopence for a lecture not worth a penny." Gibbon, after discovering that his tutor was ready to listen to him stumbling through Latin plays if he chose to do so, but was just as pleased if he occupied himself in other ways, used his rooms in Magdalen as a warehouse for his books and furniture, while he enjoyed himself in London. In later years Johnson developed more kindly feelings towards the state of scholarship at Oxford, for he spoke highly in praise of both his college and the University, but there is overwhelming evidence that the man who did not wish to work was not encouraged to do so.

It was said at the time that there were scholars and gentlemen at Oxford, but the scholars were not gentlemen, and the gentlemen were not scholars. It was unfashionable to read hard, though it is recorded that Charles James Fox impaired his health so much by overwork that his father took him away before he had got his degree.

Scholarship was not dead, but learned Dons did not trouble themselves to coerce the idle. It was said that a jackass could get a degree if it paid the fees and conformed with certain formalities. To get an M.A. degree a man had to lecture several times in public. The public, however, never came to hear him. As the aspirant for the degree lectured only to walls, if he lectured at all, he

was said to deliver Wall Lectures. In point of fact he conformed with the statutes by sitting for a certain number of hours alone in the schools awaiting the audience that never came. This was an abuse as old as the time of Dr. Fell, who, as Vice-Chancellor, made himself unpopular by being an audience, and a critical one, in his own person, when a man was delivering one of these lectures.

The formalities which undergraduates had to go through were equally farcical, and when examined for their B.A. degrees they usually contrived by tipping the Proctor's servant to choose their own examiners, whom they entertained at dinner both before and after the event.

Lord Eldon, in giving evidence in the early part of the nineteenth century before a Parliamentary Commission that enquired into the examination system at Oxford, related that when he was examined in Hebrew the only question put to him was: "What is the Hebrew for a skull?" His prompt answer, "Golgotha," satisfied the examiners. As a result of this Commission the whole examination system was overhauled and reformed, and Oxford set herself to live down the rebuke she had fairly earned of being, according to Lord Chesterfield, a place of which no one would ever hear were it not for the seditious spirit which prevailed there.

XXI

SOME MORE OXFORD POETS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

IT is curious that of all Oxford's poets scarcely one has found inspiration in its beautiful peaceful neighbourhood. The charm of the stately city has aroused the enthusiasm of many. To William Morris, of Exeter, it presented "a vision of grey-roofed houses and a long winding street and the sound of many bells." Wordsworth, though not an Oxford man, paid tribute to the beauty of "the stream-like windings of that glorious street"—the High Street. Addison, of Queen's and Magdalen, wrote Latin verses in praise of Magdalen bowling-green, and several of his less-known contemporaries celebrated in laboured verse "The blooming toasts of Oxford town," Oxford ale, its eighteenth-century coffee-houses, undergraduate life, and the political squabbles of the University in days when Whig and Tory cordially hated each another. Southey spent a great part of his undergraduate life on the river: to row and to swim were, he said, the only things he learned at Oxford, but he has given us no *Ode to Isis*. He declared

that his pleasantest hours were passed in Magdalen Walk by the half-hidden Cherwell; but he acknowledges no debt to the drowsy charm of Iffley or Parson's Pleasure. Andrew Lang, of Balliol and Merton, has caught some of the charm of the countryside in his poem *Almæ Matres*—

> "A land of waters green and clear,
> Of willows and of poplars tall,
> And, in the spring time of the year,
> The white may breaking over all,
> And Pleasure quick to come at call,
> And summer rides by marsh and wold,
> And autumn with her crimson pall
> About the towers of Magdalen rolled,"

but with one exception his are practically the only lines that celebrate the beauty that surrounds Oxford.

It is, perhaps, because this beauty is soothing rather than inspiring that it has rarely been celebrated in verse. It lacks the majesty of mountain torrent, rugged hill-side, or wind-swept moor, and offers instead the homely charm of a sluggish, sedge-bordered stream that winds sleepily among broad meadows, of haystacks and byre, of waving cornfields and low tree-crowned hills. No stream in the world, perhaps, has quite the peculiar beauty of the narrow, willow-shaded Cherwell, flowing slowly under a green arch of trees; but it woos a man to dream instead

of inspiring him to rhyme. The eyes of those who moor their punts to its bank in the long, sweet summer afternoons close softly and peacefully instead of rolling in fine frenzy, as a poet's should.

It may be that those who do not dream on the bosom of smooth, sliding Cherwell weave strange fancies. Here, at any rate, C. L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll"), of Christchurch, conceived the quaint, fantastic, topsy-turvy adventures of the imaginary Alice who has won the love of children of all ages in both hemispheres. How the story grew is told in the prelude to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*—

"All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied;
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict 'to begin it';

In gentler tones Secunda hopes
'There will be nonsense in it'!
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not *more* than once a minute."

It needed some special circumstance to inspire a poet to celebrate the tranquil beauty of the Oxford landscape. This arose when it became associated in the mind of Matthew Arnold with the memory of his dead friend, Arthur Henry Clough. Together they had watched summer steal over the countryside

"With whitening hedges and uncrumpled fern
And blue-bells, trembling by the forest ways,
And scent of new-mown hay,"

seen the Bagley Woods put on their autumn garb of red and gold, and returning homewards on winter evenings down the slope of Cumnor Hills, marked

"The line of festal light in Christchurch Hall."

Ties of the deepest affection bound Clough and Arnold. They were boys together at Rugby, and undergraduates at Balliol. Both became Fellows of Oriel. Both were poets, and both knew the dark waters of spiritual doubt, which perhaps inspired Clough with the fine lines that have been placed at the head of Chapter VIII. The Ox-

TRINITY COLLEGE FROM BALLIOL FELLOWS' GARDEN

In gentler moods Secunda hopes
"There will be peasants in it";
While Tityrus interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

It required some special circumstance to inspire a poet to celebrate the tranquil beauty of the Oxford landscape. This arose when it became associated in the mind of Matthew Arnold with the memory of his dead friend, Arthur Henry Clough. Together they had strolled

... over the countryside

... and unstamped *lanes*
... by the forest ways.
... of new-mown hay,"

... their antique garb of red
... morning fieldpaths on winter evenings
... of Cumnor Hills, marked

... of festal light in Christchurch Hall.

... deepest affection bound Clough and Arnold. ... Rugby, and undergraduates ... Both were ... Fellows of Oriel. Both were poets, and ... knew the deep waters of spiritual doubt, which perhaps inspired Clough with the fine lines that have been placed at the head of Chapter VIII. The Oxford scholar would have valued them

ford countryside, therefore, being hallowed by associations with his dead friend, served Arnold for a theme in his two poems, *Thyrsis* and *The Scholar Gipsy*.

The scholar gipsy was a poor student at Oxford in the middle of the seventeenth century, who, "tired of knocking at preferment's door," abandoned the home of learning and went to live among gipsies. Clough and Arnold in their walks used to please themselves with the fancy that the spirit of the scholar gipsy still lingered in their favourite haunts,

"Above Godstow bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames."

They fancied that they met him "crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe," and "battling with the snow tow'rd Hinksey and its wintry ridge."

When Arnold lost his friend he found comfort in wandering among the scenes hallowed to him by their friendship, and in describing the simple, homely scenes on which they had looked together.

"Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words will be,
Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
In the old haunt, and find our tree-topp'd hill,
Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?
I know the wood which hides the daffodil,
I know the Fyfield tree,
I know what white, what purple fritillaries

The grassy harvest of the river-fields
Above by Ensham, down by Sandford yields,
And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries.

"Where is the girl, who by the boatman's door,
Above the locks, above the boating throng
Unmoored our skiff when through the Wytham flats,
Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among
And darting swallows and light water gnats,
We tracked the shy Thames shore?
Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heaved the river-grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass?—
They all are gone, and thou art gone as well!"

Among other Oxford poets, Reginald Heber, of Brasenose and All Souls, must be included as the author of *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* and of one of the few Newdigate Prize poems, *Palestine*, that have had more than local and ephemeral fame. The Brasenose custom of annually singing the praises of the college ale had given rise to the production of a great deal of flippant verse, to which the future Bishop of Calcutta was not ashamed to contribute. In a poem, written in his undergraduate days, called the *Whippiad*, he described an unseemly scuffle that had taken place in the quadrangle between the Dean of the College and a Master of Arts named Port, in which the former was knocked down.

FRONT QUADRANGLE OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE, SHOWING IN THE BACKGROUND THE FAMOUS HORSE-CHESTNUT KNOWN AS HEBER'S TREE

The Dean, like many men of his time, loved "a beaker full of the warm South," and Heber maliciously suggested that it was not the first time in which he had been "overcome by *Port*."

Of all Heber's contemporaries at Brasenose it would be difficult to imagine one less likely to assimilate with him (judging them by their published work) than the author of the *Ingoldsby Legends*. That Barham was a friend of Heber's, we have, however, the former's own testimony in his *Lay of St. Dunstan*, in which he describes the turret in which St. Dunstan practised his magical arts as—

"Such a tower as a poet of no mean calibre
I once knew and loved, poor dear Reginald Heber,
Assigns to oblivion[1]—a den for a She-bear."

Barham's testimony serves to remind us that men have more sides to their characters than they show to the public. That Barham himself was not always flippant is shown by his fine lines on the execution of a criminal in Mr. Sucklethumbkin's story, and his poem, "As I laye a-thynkynge," and that Heber was not exactly an anchorite we know from the fact that he was one of the original members of the Phœnix Wine Club, the longest lived social club in Oxford.

[1] Referring to the lines in the poem with which Heber won the Newdigate Prize.

"And cold oblivion, 'midst the ruin laid,
Folds her dank wing beneath the ivy shade."

A poet who added to the gaiety of his period (though he did so unwillingly and unconsciously) was Robert Montgomery, of Lincoln. He had the most amazingly good opinion of himself, coupled with an entire lack of humour. When he produced his poem, *Satan*, he could not understand why men were amused at his description of himself as "the author of *The Omnipresence of the Deity*, and when some of his fellow-undergraduates facetiously suggested that the number of people who would doubtless crowd to witness the examination of so famous a poet might upset him and prevent him from doing his best, he actually went to the Vice-Chancellor and asked that his *viva voce* examination might be postposed till late in the vacation when Oxford would be comparatively empty!

Robert Montgomery would long ago have been forgotten but for the sledge-hammer criticism with which Macaulay attacked his feeble muse, destroying at one blow the author's complacency and the homage of an uncritical public which had caused *The Omnipresence of the Deity* to run into eleven editions. It is possible that the great essayist and critic, whose own poems were somewhat suggestive of a brass band, would have stayed his hand had he known that Montgomery had to rely on the sale of his poems for the payment of his fees at Oxford.

Besides Arnold and Clough, Balliol had the honour of

housing, if not of educating, Calverley.[1] Calverley's reputation is hardly as great as his undoubted genius warrants. He could seldom resist the temptation to play a practical joke on a Don, his readers, or anyone else. He translated parts of Homer's *Iliad* into English verse with such skill that besides preserving something of the Homeric lilt and rhythm, his translation is almost literal enough to serve idle men for a "crib." When a pushing tobacconist, hoping to get a gratuitous advertisement, asked Calverley to write an ode to his wares, Calverley dashed off an impromptu couplet in which he described the man's cigars as evil-smelling cabbages. The couplet was in Latin, and the tobacconist, not being able to read it, supposed it to be what he had asked for, and proudly displayed it in his window. Calverley translated the majestic lines of Milton's *Lycidas* into Latin verse that in dignity and harmony was worthy of its original, yet he jeered at the great poet's theme in the lines—

"Oh! when the green slopes of Arcadia burned
With all the lustre of the dying day,
And on Cithæron's brow the reaper turned
(Humming, of course, in his delightful way,
How Lycidas was dead, and how concerned
The Nymphs were when they saw his lifeless clay;
And how rock told to rock the dreadful story
That poor young Lycidas was gone to glory)."

[1] His name while at Oxford was Blayds.

Calverley's facility in composition was extraordinary. The verses with which he won the Balliol scholarship were written so quickly that they may almost be said to have been improvised. On one occasion, having had to prepare a Latin theme, to be read at a certain lecture, he found himself in the lecture-room, owing to the press of more attractive engagements, without a word written. When called upon to read his exercise, holding his empty note-book before him he declaimed with perfect accuracy and fluency sentences that he made up as he uttered them. His readiness of wit saved him from many a scrape. On one occasion, at the examination known as "collections," he was asked with what feelings we ought to regard the Decalogue. He had not the foggiest notion what the Decalogue was, but guessing it to be something Biblical, he boldly drew his bow at a venture and returned an answer that won the enthusiastic approval of his examiner, "With feelings of devotion mingled with awe."

Calverley's love of practical jokes brought him into frequent conflicts with the powers above him. Unfortunately his biographer, Sir Walter Sendall, with too scrupulous reverence for his memory, has preserved only such of the milder ones as might be read with perfect propriety at a Penny Reading for Sunday-school children, and tradition, tending, as tradition always does, to attribute all memorable deeds to the best-remembered heroes, has credited Calverley with more exploits than any ten

mortal undergraduates could have performed and remained at the University. Tales of doings ascribed to Calverley must therefore be received with caution. One of the best-known of these traditions is to the effect that he was once conducting over the college a party of ladies who desired to see the Master. Calverley said that that could easily be managed. Picking up a stone he threw it through a window that looked on to the quadrangle. "That's the Master's window," he said, "and if you wait a moment you will see the Master himself."

The Master had a strong aversion to "herba nicotiana sive tobacco," to which Calverley was much addicted. Not being able to punish him for the use of the weed, which despite University statutes was in general use, the Master sought some other excuse for correcting him. Knowing this, some anonymous poet wrote on a wall—

> "O, Freshman, running fast to seed,
> O scholar, redolent of weed,
> This motto in thy meerschaum put,
> The sharpest Blayds will soonest cut."

Underneath which Calverley (his name was Blayds at that time) wrote—

> "Your wit is tolerable, but
> The case you understand ill;
> The Dons would like their Blayds to cut,
> But cannot find a handle."

The authorities found a handle against him at last, and Calverley was requested for some madder freak than usual to take his name off the college books. He did so, jumped into a train, and before the day was out had applied for admission to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he continued his brilliant and erratic career.

Last of Oxford's nineteenth-century poets must be mentioned he for whose recent death all England is still mourning. Swinburne was at Balliol from 1856 to 1860, where he came under the influence of the famous Dr. Jowett, and where he began his long friendship with Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and William Morris (who had come to Oxford to paint frescoes for the Union Club), the leaders of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. One day, being disgusted at the crudity of his work, compared with *The Blessed Damozel*, which was written when Rossetti was twenty-two years old and Swinburne twenty-one, Swinburne told Dr. Jowett that he had made a bonfire of his verses. Jowett replied to the effect that some day Swinburne would make another kind of blaze with them.

XXII

ODIOUS COMPARISONS

"Know ye her secret none can utter?
Hers of the book, the tripled Crown?
Still on the spire the pigeons flutter;
Still by the gateway flits the gown;
Still on the street from corbel and gutter
Faces of stone look down."

"Q" (of Trinity).

THE making of odious comparisons was long ago recognised as an offence by Oxford Dons—Brasenose men in Tudor times were liable to be flogged for it—but it is impossible to wander round Oxford of to-day without thinking of the Oxford of bygone days and wondering whether her spirit has remained untouched by the passing of the centuries. Of the men that Oxford begot in her youth, one of the noblest was Edmund of Abingdon, the reputed founder of St. Edmund Hall. He regarded learning as a thing not to be sold but to be given away. Men came to his lectures and paid what fees they chose, or did not pay at all, as their consciences

directed and the weight of their purses allowed. Is the spirit of St. Edmund still alive in Oxford? In the slums of Whitechapel a little colony of Oxford men, inspired by Toynbee, of Balliol, are devoting their lives ungrudgingly to leaven the ignorance and squalor around them with light and knowledge. Scores of Oxford men in the past have cheerfully died for the faith they held dear. Is there any reason for supposing that scores of Oxford men would not do as much to-day? The memory of two modern martyrs, Hannington, of St. Mary's Hall, and Patteson, of Merton, is still fresh, and there are hundreds of Oxford men who, not being called upon to die for their faith, are cheerfully living for it, teaching and preaching in the drear and lonely places of the earth. Oxford has never for any long period lacked religious enthusiasts. The age of the schoolmen produced Wycliffe, that of the New Learning gave birth to Colet and Erasmus. The dark days of the Reformation saw many Oxford martyrs. Laud worked and died for a high ideal. The period in which Oxford sank into sloth and decay was brightened by the spiritual enthusiasm of Wesley, of Christchurch and Lincoln, and Whitefield, of Pembroke; and the religious revival of the nineteenth century was the work of Keble, of Corpus and Oriel; Pusey, of Oriel and Christchurch; and Newman, of Trinity and Oriel.

The importance of Oxford as a factor in the State has waned since, in Wycliffe's day, it championed the English

THE RADCLIFFE CAMERA FROM ALL SOULS QUADRANGLE

priesthood against Papal extortion; and politically its influence is not as great to-day as it was when Charles II dissolved Parliament in London and summoned it a week later to Oxford, in the hope that the Whig members who opposed him would be coaxed or cowed into submission by the loyal members of the University. Little would be effected to-day by suddenly transferring the House of Commons from St. Stephen's to the Divinity Schools. Though Oxford has lost her importance in this respect she has, however, during the last half-century, gradually become influential in a new direction. Among the crowds of undergraduates that read in the Bodleian and Radcliffe or stroll along the High Street, the tourist is often startled to see the shining black visage of a negro from Sierra Leone, the inscrutable mask of a Japanese, or the thin thoughtful face of a Hindoo. The sight of these alien faces illustrates as nothing else could the place that Oxford is taking in the modern world. Just as men flocked to Italy, when in the fifteenth century the long night of the Middle Ages had broken in the glorious dawn of the Renaissance, so representatives of races that have stood still while the British nation emerged from barbarism to the leadership of the world, now come to Oxford to partake of her wisdom and carry it back with them to their distant homes. Does Oxford do well or ill to give of her wisdom so freely to men who are not of our blood? If the greater part of the world's wars arise

from misunderstanding, surely the meeting of men of many races for a common object makes for the world's peace. This was the belief of Cecil Rhodes, of Oriel, the dreamer of great dreams. Believing that the preservation of the peace of the world lay in the hands of men of Teuton blood, he made provisions in his will for the founding at Oxford of scholarships that should be open to citizens of the British Empire, the German Empire, and the United States.

Will his dream come true? Will Oxford lay the foundation-stone of "the parliament of man," and be the herald of an age in which

"The common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law"?

The matter is on the knees of the gods. Oxford has seven hundred honourable years behind her. What is before her none can tell.

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Oxford, its buildings and gardens